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Advantage 1 is Readiness.

Biden and the Senate have rejected a military living wage amid a recruitment crisis—it's damning for troop levels.

Phillips 24 [Morgan, 6-13-2024, Morgan Phillips covers Congress for DailyMail.com from Washington, D.C. She previously worked for Fox News Digital in New York City and holds a bachelor's degree in Journalism and Politics from New York University. "Republican fury over Biden opposition to pay raise for troops", Daily Mail, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-13527559/republican-fury-biden-opposition-military-pay-raise-food-stamps.html>; roshan]

Republicans tore into President **Biden's 'insane'** and '**politically suicidal**' **opposition** to giving junior **enlisted members** a nearly **20 percent pay boost** **amid recruitment issues**.

In a **Tuesday statement about opposition** to the House's version of the National Defense Authorization Act (**NDAA**), the White House Budget Office said a **plan to give low-ranking troops a 19.5% boost in basic pay next year would be too expensive**.

'Joe **Biden** managed to become a **multi-millionaire on a public servant salary**,' Rep. Derrick Van Orden, R-Wis., told DailyMail.com. 'And he is **snatching food out of our junior enlisted people's mouths**.'

Van Orden said that while he was an active duty Navy Seal, his wife had to use WIC coupons to keep their children fed.

'It's **disgusting** and **reprehensible**. I can't feel more strongly about it. **That is bulls**t**.'

After bipartisan lawmakers spent **months studying quality-of-life issues in the military**, the House decided to offer a 4.5 percent across-the-board pay raise and an additional 15 percent bump for junior enlisted in their yearly Pentagon policy bill.

The **Senate's version** of the bill **does not currently include** the additional **14.5 percent hike** for junior enlisted.

Some early-career enlisted service members can make as little as \$24,000, **not including their housing allowances and free health care**. The House plan would ensure that service members make at least \$30,000 per year.

'It's **completely insane**,' Rep. Mike Garcia, who has led the fight for better military pay, told DailyMail.com of the Biden position. 'I **can't understand that the rationale** and in **what universe it would make sense**, either from a policy or from a political perspective.'

'They're actually going out of their way to say no to this and explain why this is a bad idea and it's, it's completely irrational and politically it's actually suicidal.'

Former President Donald Trump brought the issue up in a meeting with House Republicans on Wednesday, according to Garcia, and said he thought it would be a 'front burner issue.'

'[Trump] said **everyone knows that we're having challenges in our military right now**. So why would you **not support getting them to the equivalent of a minimum wage** which the **rest of the universe has** in our country?'

'This is a pay raise targeted at the **E1 through E4** level, who are currently **making** literally **\$12 an hour**, right now, **which** in California is about **half** of what the **fast food workers** make at **McDonald's**.'

The targeted **pay raises** would cost more than \$24 billion over the **next five years**, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

Rep. Don Bacon, R-Neb., called the White House opposition 'one of the dumbest things I've ever heard come out of [Biden's] mouth.'

One **quarter** of the military population experienced **food insecurity** between 2018 and 2020, according to the US Department of Agriculture.

More than **22,000 active-duty troops** used the food stamp program in 2019, the most recent year with data available, according to the Government Accountability Office.

'You got one out of eight ballistic guys on staff at food and water food banks, particularly in DC, San Diego,' Bacon, a member of the Armed Services Committee and retired Air Force officer, said. 'And we figured we worked hard to figure out would the price need to be to get them above that threshold.'

The **U.S. entered** this year **with** one of its **smallest defense forces** in over **80 years** as **active-duty troop numbers** sunk to less than **1.3 million** as the Department of Defense is facing **severe recruitment issues**.

Recent recruitment targets were **missed** in the **Army, Navy and Air Force**, although the Marine Corps and the newly established Space Force reached their goals.

White House officials said the proposal 'would lead to pay compression in some parts of the enlisted military basic pay table' and said it should be delayed until a full review of military compensation rules is completed next year.

Readiness declines greenlight global revisionism—military weakness is the nail in the coffin for hegemony.

Ignatieff 24 [Michael, 3-5-2024, "The Threat to American Hegemony Is Real", Project Syndicate, <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/us-western-hegemony-vulnerable-to-russian-chinese-coordinated-challenge-by-michael-ignatieff-2024-03; roshan>]

The post-1945 **world order** - written into international law, ratified by the United Nations, and kept in place by the balance of **nuclear terror** among major powers - is **hanging by a thread**. The **United States** is **divided against itself** and **stretched to the limits** of its **capabilities**. Europe is waking up to the possibility that, come November, **America may no longer fulfill its collective-defense obligations** under **Article 5 of the NATO** treaty. Faced with this new uncertainty, Europe is cranking up its defense production, and European politicians are screwing up the courage to persuade their electorates that they will need to ante up 2% of their GDP to guarantee their own safety.

The Western alliance **doesn't** just face the challenge of doubling down on defense while **maintaining unity** across the Atlantic. It also now faces an "**axis of resistance**" that might be **tempted to threaten** Western **hegemony** with a **simultaneous, coordinated challenge**. The lynchpin of this axis is the **Russia-China** "no-limits" partnership. While the Chinese supply the Russians with advanced **circuitry** for their weapons systems, Russian President Vladimir **Putin ships them cheap oil**. Together they have **imposed autocratic rule** over most of **Eurasia**.

If Ukraine's exhausted defenders are **forced to concede** Russian sovereignty over **Crimea** and the **Donbas** region, the Eurasian axis of dictators will have succeeded in changing a European land frontier **by force**. Achieving this will **threaten every state** on the edge of Eurasia: **Taiwan**, the **Baltic countries**, and even **Poland**. Both dictatorial regimes will use their **veto**s on the UN Security Council to **ratify conquest**, effectively consigning the UN Charter to history's dustbin.

This partnership of dictators works in tandem with a cluster of rights-abusing renegades, led by **Iran and North Korea**. The North Koreans provide Putin with **artillery shells** while plotting to invade the **rest of their peninsula**. The Iranians **manufacture** the **drones** that **terrorize Ukrainians** in their trenches. Meanwhile, Iran's proxies – **Hamas**, **Hezbollah**, and the **Houthis** – are helping Russia and China by **tying down America** and Israel.

Unless the US can force Israel into a long-term ceasefire, it will find itself struggling to control conflicts on three fronts (Asia, Europe, and the Middle East). Not even a country that outspends its rivals on defense by two to one can maintain a war footing simultaneously across so many theaters. The idea that democracies around the world will join up with America and Europe against the authoritarian threat seems like an illusion. Instead of joining with the embattled democracies of the Global North, the rising democracies of the Global South – Brazil, India, and South Africa – seem unembarrassed to be aligning with regimes that rely on **mass repression**, the cantonment of entire populations (the Uighurs in China), and shameless murder (Navalny being only the most recent example).

To be sure, the authoritarian axis currently is united only by what it opposes: American power. It is otherwise divided by its ultimate interests. The Chinese, for example, cannot be overjoyed that the Houthis are blocking freight traffic through the Red Sea. The world's second most powerful economy doesn't have all that much in common with an impoverished Muslim resistance army or with theocratic Iran.

Moreover, both Russia and China remain parasitic beneficiaries of a global economy that is sustained by US alliances and deterrence. That is why they still hesitate to challenge the hegemon too directly. However, like sharks, they smell blood in the water. They have not only survived US sanctions but continued to prosper, replacing their dependence on embargoed markets with new markets in Latin America, Asia, and India. Both Russia and China have discovered that American control of the global economy is not what it once was.

This discovery of American weakness might tempt them to risk a **joint military challenge**. As matters stand, US diplomacy and deterrence have successfully kept the axis divided. CIA Director William Burns and National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan are keeping the channels open to China. Blowback American strikes against Iran have apparently convinced the theocrats to rein in Hezbollah and the militias in Iraq – though not the Houthis, whom nobody seems able to control.

It doesn't take strategic genius to see the opportunity China and Russia might be contemplating. If they decided to mount an overt challenge to the American order – for example, with a coordinated, simultaneous offensive against Ukraine and Taiwan – the US would struggle to rush weapons and technology into the breach.

Nuclear weapons would not necessarily **deter China and Russia** from risking a coordinated attempt to take Taiwan and the rest of Ukraine. All parties would pay a horrendous price, but Russia has shown what it is willing to expend in Ukraine, and both China and Russia may believe that there will never be a more opportune moment to overthrow American hegemony. If they were to combine forces, we would face the most serious challenge to the global economic and strategic order since 1945.

Nobody has any idea what the world would be like on the other side of such a confrontation. We cannot even assume, as we have always done, that America would prevail if faced with a simultaneous challenge

from two formidable powers. If a pessimist is someone who imagines the worst in order to forestall it, we should all be pessimists. Keeping the **authoritarian axis** from **becoming a full-fledged alliance** should be **America's first-order priority**.

Personnel is the largest factor of readiness.

Selber 24 [Will Selber, Co-Founder, GCV+F. Contributor at The Bulwark. Co-host Generation Jihad on Wednesdays. Retired Middle East Foreign Area Officer with 20 years in the intelligence community and 4+ years in Afghanistan and Iraq. May 3, 2024, "Disaffection and Despair: Behind the Military's Recruitment Woes", No Publication, <https://www.thebulwark.com/p/disaffection-despair-all-volunteer-force-crisis;roshan>]

The **AVF** is small—**too small**. The **Army** is authorized to have 494,000 personnel, but only has 445,000, and hopes to get to 470,000 within the next five years. The **Navy** is short about 16,000 sailors and, worryingly for the future of the force, the dearth of junior sailors is particularly acute. The **Air Force** is facing such serious personnel shortfalls that it's offering pilots as much as \$600,000 to stay in the service. Only the Marine Corps and Space Force, the two smallest services, met their recruitment goals last year—barely.

This **underweight AVF** **faces** the **most complex and dangerous geopolitical landscape** since the Cold War. European Command is **knee-deep** in helping the **Ukrainians** while **bolstering** our **NATO allies**, which includes more and bigger exercises. **Central Command** is **sparring with Iran** and its proxies in **Syria, Iraq, and Yemen**, while providing security assistance to the **Israeli Defense Forces**. Indo-Pacific Command is keeping a **steady eye** on **Chinese revanchism** throughout the **Pacific**. Add the **persistent** threat of radical Islamic **terrorism**, and it should come as little surprise that the **U.S.** military is in some ways **just as busy as** it was during the **heights of the Iraq and Afghanistan War**, **despite** being at its **smallest size** since **World War II**.

After years of being told to do more with less, the **AVF is under enormous strain**. Lack of sleep is a persistent problem. This, too, I saw firsthand. Most of my airmen's work schedules changed constantly, from the graveyard shift one day to a mid-afternoon shift the next and a dawn shift after that. These changes affected not only their health, but their family lives, too. It's little wonder the military has the highest divorce rate of any career field.

The **financial strains** associated with **military service** don't help. Partly **due to inflation**, the men and women of the AVF are **struggling to put food on the table**. A whopping 24 percent of active-duty troops face some type of food insecurity. Hundreds of thousands of military families live on base to offset **rising housing costs**, but face unconscionable conditions. While the DoD works to improve childcare costs, its daycare centers have been slow to report abuse, sapping what's left of confidence in the system and driving some families to costlier private options.

When service members suffer, the military suffers. After two decades of war, **DoD has an enormous problem with readiness**, "the **ability of military forces to fight and meet the demands of assigned missions**." Its personnel are tired, demoralized, and **fighting with older equipment** not likely to withstand the rigors of conflict against either Russia or China. The Navy is struggling to keep pace with the expanding Chinese Navy—its total number of ships is about half of the 529 it had at the end of the Cold War and at least 80 short of what it says it needs. To reach those goals, the Navy plans to hang onto older ships long past when it expected to retire them. The Air Force—with its active inventory of aircraft now "the oldest, smallest, and least ready in its 76-year history"—has been slow to the drone fight, as it remains wedded to an antiquated style of aerial combat. Both the Army and Marine Corps are restructuring their forces, causing howls of indignation and opposition in cultures that are often resistant to change. It is little wonder that **DoD is "freaking out" about a potential conflict with China**.

Perceptual hegemonic decline goes nuclear in multiple hotspots and triggers bioterror.

Means '21 [Grady; 2021; Former Policy Assistant to Vice President Nelson Rockefeller, Retired American Business Executive, MA in Economics and Engineering from Stanford University; The Hill, "Biden Brings the World Closer to Nuclear War," <https://thehill.com/opinion/white-house/569732-biden-brings-the-world-closer-to-nuclear-war>]

Over the past six months, the world has edged closer to nuclear war than it has been since the Cuban Missile Crisis. The Doomsday Clock is ticking toward midnight. The global power balance has been dramatically reshuffled, and the potential for disastrous miscalculation hasn't been so high in 80 years. The match and fuse for this is instability — an exaggerated sense of U.S. weakness and lack of capability and resolve — that could lead to huge, aggressive military miscalculations and mistakes by our enemies. The Biden administration has set the table for such a catastrophe.

The timing could not be more dangerous. China has changed strategic direction and has been building its nuclear stockpile and delivery systems. China also has continued to develop hypersonic weapons, including stand-off "carrier killers," space weapons and cyber capabilities to blind opponents' strategic and conventional systems. Russia has been advertising (mostly for domestic consumption, but nonetheless worrying) its "unstoppable" delivery systems, and has a very capable nuclear stockpile and military. Iran will continue to move forward with building nuclear weapons. Pakistan and India both have significant nuclear capability in an increasingly unstable part of the world. Nuclear-armed North Korea is again assuming a more belligerent posture. Israel has a full nuclear triad (land, air, subs) to respond to existential aggression. The U.K. and France have significant nuclear deterrents. The world is a powder keg.

In Hollywood terms, today's capacity for nuclear holocaust is thousands of times greater than the era portrayed in the Armageddon films "On the Beach," "Fail Safe," or "Dr. Strangelove." There would not be anything left for "Mad Max." Climate disasters may be unfolding over the next hundred years. Nuclear disaster is unfolding now. COVID-19 has killed more Americans than the flu typically does. Nuclear war could kill us all. Our leaders must get their priorities straight.

The danger lies in the growing global perception of weakness and incompetence in the Biden administration, combined with claims of the politicized weakening of the FBI, CIA, State Department and Defense Department. This has crystallized in Secretary of State Antony Blinken's unsure Anchorage meeting with the Chinese, Biden's wooden Geneva summit with Russia's Vladimir Putin, the colossal failure of the Afghan withdrawal, which may devolve into a humiliating hostage crisis for America, and the budget- and inflation-based defunding of Defense. In addition, the fully politicized Intelligence and Armed Services committees on Capitol Hill add to the danger. Our enemies may decide that now is the time to move.

It would be a huge miscalculation.

Catastrophic mistakes at this scale often unfold when isolated events light powder kegs, which then inexorably explode into global conflict.

An incident in Sarajevo lit a powder keg of nationalistic, economic and ambitious personality struggles in Europe to unleash World War I. A century later, possible "Sarajevos" are numerous: China's overly aggressive and self-confident People's Liberation Army pushing for the use of military force against Taiwan, calculating a weak and ineffective U.S. response, leading to the sinking of a U.S. carrier and a potential march toward nuclear

exchange. Major North Korean **aggression against South Korea**, or an off-course North Korean missile hitting a Japanese city. A successful Iranian (Hamas, Hezbollah) terrorist **attack against an Israel** city. The **seizure of** one or more **Pakistani nuclear weapons** systems by a Taliban or another terrorist-linked group. Overt aggression or a “misunderstanding” between Pakistan and India. A **“Crimson Tide” communications error**. Proof that a devastating **bioterror** attack was intentional. The list of potential **doomsday scenarios** is **endless**.

The one powerful factor holding back such **miscalculations** **has been coherent U.S. foreign policy and resolve**, combined with pragmatists in Moscow and Beijing. But in the past six months, the world’s confidence in the U.S. leadership has begun to slip. An agonizing hostage crisis would make it even more dangerous. Added to that is the potential that a stubborn and wounded U.S. administration might overreact to try to show its strength. The U.S. has devastating countermeasures for all enemy strategies, and an enemy underestimating that power, combined with a White House trying to prove itself, could be disastrous.

Hegemony and the LIO are sustainable---retrenchment causes authoritarianism and global wars.

Rice ’24 [Condoleezza; August 20; Director of the Hoover Institution at Stanford University, PhD in Political Science at Josef Korbel School of International Studies at the University of Denver, MA in Political Science at the University of Notre Dame, former Secretary of State; Foreign Affairs, “The Perils of Isolationism,” <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/perils-isolationism-condoleezza-rice>]

WHAT IT TAKES

This strategy will require investment. **The United States needs to maintain the defense capabilities sufficient to deny China, Russia, and Iran their strategic goals.** The war in Ukraine has revealed weaknesses in the U.S. defense industrial base that must be remedied. Critical reforms need to be made to the defense budgeting process, which is inadequate to this task. Congress must strive to enhance the Defense Department’s long-term strategic planning process, as well as its ability to adapt to evolving threats. The Pentagon should also work with Congress to gain greater efficiencies from the amount it already spends. Costs can be reduced in part by speeding up the Pentagon’s slow procurement and acquisition processes so that the military can better harness the remarkable technology coming out of the private sector. Beyond military capabilities, the United States must rebuild the other elements of its diplomatic toolkit—such as information operations—that have eroded since the Cold War.

The United States and other democracies must win the technological arms race, since in the future, transformative technologies will be the most important source of national power. The debate about the balance between regulation and innovation is just beginning. But while the possible downsides should be acknowledged, **ultimately it is more important to unleash these technologies’ potential for societal good and national security. Chinese progress can be slowed but not stopped**, and the United States will have to run fast and hard to win this race. **Democracies will investigate these technologies, call congressional hearings about them, and debate their impact openly. Authoritarians will not. For this reason, among many others, authoritarians must not triumph.**

The good news is that **given the behavior of China and Russia, the United States’ allies are ready to contribute to the common defense.** Many countries in the Asia-Pacific region, including **Australia**, the **Philippines**, and **Japan**, **recognize the threat** and appear committed to addressing it. Relations between Japan and South Korea are better than ever. Moscow’s recent agreements with Pyongyang have alarmed Seoul and should deepen its cooperation with democratic allies. **India**, through its membership in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue—also known as **the Quad**, the strategic partnership that also includes Australia, Japan, and the United States—**is cooperating** closely with the U.S. military and

emerging as a pivotal power in the Indo-Pacific. **Vietnam**, too, appears willing to **contribute**, given its own strategic concerns with China. The challenge will be to turn the ambitions of U.S. partners into sustained commitment once the costs of enhanced defense capabilities become clear.

In Europe, the war in **Ukraine** has **mobilized NATO** in ways unimaginable a few years ago. The addition of **Sweden and Finland** to NATO's Arctic flank brings real military capability and **helps secure the Baltic states**. The question of postwar security arrangements for Ukraine hangs over the continent at this moment. The most straightforward answer would be to admit Ukraine to NATO and simultaneously to the European Union. Both institutions have accession processes that would take some time. **The key point is this: Moscow needs to know that the alliance does not intend to leave a vacuum in Europe.**

The United States also needs a strategy for dealing with the nonaligned states of the global South. These countries will insist on strategic flexibility, and Washington should resist the urge to issue loyalty tests. Rather, it should develop policies that address their concerns. Above all, the United States needs a meaningful alternative to the Belt and Road Initiative, China's massive global infrastructure program. The **BRI is** often depicted as helping China win hearts and minds, but in reality it is **not winning anything**. **Recipients are growing frustrated with the corruption, poor safety and labor standards, and fiscal unsustainability associated with its projects.** The aid that the United States, Europe, Japan, and others offer is small by comparison, but unlike Chinese aid, it can attract significant foreign direct investment from the private sector, thus dwarfing the amount provided by the BRI. But you can't beat something with nothing. A U.S. strategy that shows no interest in a region until China shows up is not going to succeed. **Washington needs to demonstrate sustained engagement with countries in the global South on the issues they care about—namely, economic development, security, and climate change.**

WHICH WAY, AMERICA?

The pre-World War II era was defined not only by great-power conflict and a weak international order but also by a rising tide of populism and isolationism. So is the current era. The main question hanging over the international system today is, Where does America stand?

The biggest difference between the first half of the twentieth century and the second half was the fact of Washington's sustained and purposeful global engagement. After World War II, the United States was a confident country, with a baby boom, a growing middle class, and unbridled optimism about the future. The struggle against communism provided bipartisan unity, even if there were sometimes disagreements over specific policies. Most agreed with President John F. Kennedy that their country was willing to "pay any price, bear any burden" in the defense of freedom.

The United States is a different country now—exhausted by eight decades of international leadership, some of it successful and appreciated, and some of it dismissed as failure. The American people are different, too—less confident in their institutions and in the viability of the American dream. Years of divisive rhetoric, Internet echo chambers, and, even among the best-educated youth, ignorance of the complexity of history have left Americans with a tattered sense of shared values. For the latter problem, elite cultural institutions bear much of the blame. They have rewarded those who tear down the United States and ridiculed those who extol its virtues. To address Americans' lack of faith in their institutions and in one another, schools and colleges must change their curricula to offer a more balanced view of U.S. history. And instead of creating a climate that reinforces one's existing opinions, these and other institutions should encourage a healthy debate in which competing ideas are encouraged.

That said, great-power DNA is still very much in the American genome. Americans carry two contradictory thoughts simultaneously. One side of the brain looks at the world and thinks that the United States has done enough, saying, "It is someone else's turn." The other side looks abroad and sees a large country trying to extinguish a smaller one, children choking on nerve gas, or a terrorist group beheading a journalist and says, "We must act." The president can appeal to either side.

The new Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse—**populism, nativism, isolationism, and protectionism**—tend to ride together, and they **are challenging the political center**. **Only the United States can counter their advance** and resist the temptation to go back to the future. **But generating support for an internationalist foreign policy requires a president to paint a vivid picture of what that world would be like without an active United States.** In such a world, **an emboldened Putin and Xi**, having defeated Ukraine, would **move on to their next**

conquest. Iran would celebrate the United States' withdrawal from the Middle East and sustain its illegitimate regime by external **conquest** through its proxies. **Hamas** and **Hezbollah** would **launch more wars**, and hopes that Gulf Arab states would normalize relations with Israel would be dashed. The international economy would be **weaker**, sapping U.S. growth. **International waters** would be **contested**, with piracy and other incidents at sea stalling the movement of goods. American leaders should remind the public that a reluctant United States has repeatedly been drawn into conflict—in 1917, 1941, and 2001. Isolation has never been the answer to the country's security or prosperity.

Then, a leader must say that the United States is well positioned to design a different future. The country's endlessly creative private sector is capable of continuous innovation. The United States has an unparalleled and secure energy bounty from Canada to Mexico that can sustain it through a reasonable energy transition over the many years it will take. It has more allies than any great power in history and good friends, as well. People around the world seeking a better life still dream of becoming Americans. If the United States can summon the will to deal with its immigration puzzle, it will not suffer the demographic calamity that faces most of the developed world.

The United States' global involvement will not look exactly as it has for the last 80 years. Washington is likely to choose its engagements more carefully. If deterrence is strong, that may be enough. Allies will have to bear more of the cost of defending themselves. Trade agreements will be less ambitious and global but more regional and selective.

Internationalists must admit that they had a blind spot for those Americans, such as the unemployed coal miner and steelworker, who lost out as good jobs fled abroad. And the forgotten did not take kindly to the argument that they should shut up and be happy with cheap Chinese goods. This time, there can be no more platitudes about the advantages of globalization for all. There must be a real effort to give people meaningful education, skills, and job training. The task is even more urgent since technological progress will severely punish those who cannot keep up.

Those who argue for engagement will need to reframe what it means. The 80 years of U.S. internationalism is another analogy that doesn't perfectly fit the circumstances of today. Still, if the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries taught Americans anything, it is this: other great powers don't mind their own business. Instead, they seek to shape the global order. The future will be determined by the alliance of democratic, free-market states or it will be determined by the revisionist powers, harking back to a day of territorial conquest abroad and authoritarian practices at home. There is simply no other option.

China's desire for spheres of influence are historically rooted--- they use coercion to destroy alliances.

Brands and Beckley 22 [Hal Brands, Henry A. Kissinger distinguished professor of global affairs at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute Michael Beckley, associate professor of political science at Tufts University and a nonresident senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. "What Does China Want?," Foreign Policy, 8-16-2022, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/08/13/what-china-wants-us-conflict/>, roshan]

Second, the **CCP wants to make China whole again by regaining territories lost in earlier eras of internal upheaval and foreign aggression.** Xi's map of China includes a **Hong Kong** that is completely **reincorporated** into the CCP-led state (a process that is well underway) and a **Taiwan** that has been **brought back** into Beijing's grasp. Elsewhere along its periphery, the CCP has **outstanding border disputes with** countries from **India to Japan.** Beijing also **claims some 90 percent of the South China Sea—one of the world's most commercially vital waterways**—as its sovereign possession. Chinese officials say that there is no room for compromise on these issues. "We cannot lose even one inch of the territory left behind by our ancestors," Xi told then-U.S. Secretary of Defense James Mattis in 2018.

The CCP's third aim is to **create** a regional **sphere of influence** in which China is **supreme** because outside actors, especially the **United States**, are **pushed to the margins**. Beijing probably doesn't envision the sort of outright physical dominance that the Soviet Union exercised in Eastern Europe during the Cold War. The **CCP envisions**, rather, **using** a mix of **attraction and coercion** to ensure that the **economies** of maritime Asia are **oriented toward Beijing** rather than Washington, that **smaller powers** are properly **deferential to the CCP**, and that the **United States no longer has** the **alliances**, regional **military presence, or influence** necessary to **create problems** for China in its own front yard. As Xi said in 2014, "It is for the people of Asia to run the affairs of Asia, solve the problems of Asia, and uphold the security of Asia." Other officials have been more explicit. In 2010, then-Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi told 10 Southeast Asian countries that "**China is a big country and you are small countries, and that is a fact.**"

Taiwan war causes extinction.

Easton 23 [Ian Easton, Research fellow at the Project 2049 Institute, over two years professional research, analysis and translation experience in greater Washington D.C. on issues involving Asia-Pacific defense, security, advanced technology and foreign affairs." If Taiwan Falls: Future Scenarios and Implications for the United States " No Publication, February 2023, https://pacforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Issues_and_Insights_Vol23_SR2.pdf; roshan]

By **seizing Taiwan**, the **PRC** would have effectively **carved out** a **sphere of influence** for itself in Asia using violent methods. This invasion would have **grave implications for international law**, the ideal of national **self-determination**, and the principle of state **sovereignty**. The fall of Taiwan would **undermine perceptions of U.S. global diplomatic and military leadership**, straining (and possibly **breaking**) the American **alliance system** and the **United Nations System**. **China** would be **viewed as the most powerful** nation in the world and the primary mover of the 21st century. Leaders would experience trepidation as Beijing marched toward its vision of a **new centralized, authoritarian world order**.

Nuclear arms racing would start and could **easily** rapidly **spiral** out of control. The likelihood of **World War Three** breaking out could climb higher than anything previously **seen**. It can be expected that the **world would begin sliding toward the brink of an abyss**, and human **civilization** would **risk** being knocked backward in its developmental story. Abstract **ideas like international law** and universal values would increasingly **appear** quaint, even faintly **ridiculous**. This would be a new age of empires; might would once more make right.

In such circumstances, **Japan could** be expected to **go nuclear** and become **heavily militarized**. Tokyo would likely be in the grip of a profound sense of **insecurity and disillusionment with U.S. defense guarantees**. It is possible that **Japanese politics could swing in a right-wing, authoritarian direction**. Alternatively, it is possible that far left-wing politicians could gain power, and **Japan might end up band wagoning with China**. In either event, there would be an increasing risk that **Japan's democracy would erode**, and the country could experience a **wave of political violence**. Over time, it may even be possible that Japan would **become a dictatorship**.

South Korea would almost **certainly** feel itself being **pulled into China orbit**, and policymakers in Seoul would face the **unpalatable** choice of losing of their **freedom** and **sovereignty** or resisting CCP influence alongside the United States and Japan. South Korea would likely **go nuclear** and attempt to save their nation from takeover by building an **independent deterrent** force. South Korea may experience an even **deeper domestic political crisis** than Japan. It seems likely that the **Philippines**, **Indonesia**, **Malaysia**, and other **Southeast Asia nations** that are currently **hedging** their bets would **conclude** that **they had no choice** but to **align** themselves **with Beijing** **against** the United States.

North Korea would likely be **emboldened** by a successful Chinese invasion of Taiwan and reconsider **long-dormant plans** to weaken and, if possible, **destroy South Korea's** government and affect a takeover of the peninsula. With the **power** and **prestige** of the United States drastically **reduced** and South Korea acutely vulnerable, it seems probable that North Korea would seek to obtain China's help in **attacking South Korea**. Beijing is likely to see the situation as an opportunity to drive American forces off the Asian mainland. **China's** government would probably encourage and **support** some degree of North Korean **aggression**. At a minimum, an unprecedented campaign of **coercion** would likely result, which could **escalate to war**. At the same time, CCP influence over Pyongyang would grow, and North Korea would struggle in vain to maintain its independence from the new PRC empire. **India** would almost certainly see the loss of Taiwan as a **national security disaster** and **quickly expand** its nuclear weapons **arsenal** and further build up its conventional military along the border. With **Taiwan gone**, the PLA would likely focus on re-taking **territories controlled by Delhi** as its next major mission. Australia will fear being encircled and isolated as the Chinese military pushes across the South Pacific. Canberra might opt to develop its own independent nuclear armaments program and **accelerate plans to acquire nuclear-powered submarines**. The Quad would be at a distinctive crossroads; it may become the foundation for a **collective security organization** like **NATO**, but it could just as easily **fall apart**.

A similar crossroads would be reached in Europe. With the **United States** distracted humiliated by **China**, NATO countries might rally together in common cause and redouble their efforts to **bolster collective security**. It seems at least as probable, however, that the **post-war bonds** that have long tied together the great democracies of Europe would **fray**. Combined **Chinese and Russian influence campaigns** might succeed in getting countries such as **Germany**, **France**, and **Italy** to embrace pro-Beijing policies that drive them against the United States and **fatally fracture** the **NATO** alliance network. European disunion might follow, throwing the continent into a political environment eerily reminiscent of the 1920s and 1930s. With the PRC on the march and global geoeconomics in a downward spiral, **fragile governments** in the developing world could topple in large numbers, leading to **cascading waves of** seething political **violence** and, in several countries, **devastating famine** and **starvation**. Fascist, Communist, and **Islamist dictatorships** would emerge across **Eurasia**, **Africa**, and **South America**. Even European countries with moderate-to-high Human Development Index (HDI) scores might be at risk of being **overtaken by radical populist impulses** driven by the spreading economic despair. The **CCP** would seek to exploit the unstable environment as an opportunity to **rapidly spread** its model of **totalitarian governance**, create a global network of proxy governments, and **fundamentally transform** the **world order**.

Pursuit's inevitable—it's a question of efficacy.

Beckley 23 [Micheal, is Associate Professor of Political Science at Tufts University, a Nonresident Senior Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, and Director of the Asia Program at the Foreign Policy Research Institute. He is the author of *Unrivaled: Why America Will Remain the World's Sole Superpower*, "Delusions of Détente," Foreign Affairs, 8-22-2023, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/china-delusions-detente-rivals>; roshan]

American interests are perhaps less entrenched but remain too fixed to give up without a struggle. As a rich democracy surrounded by allies and oceans, the United States likes things the way they are. Its main foreign policy goal is to prevent overseas threats from spoiling the wealth and freedom its citizens enjoy at home. Many Americans would love to avoid foreign entanglements, but the world wars and the Cold War showed that powerful tyrannies can and should be contained—and that it is better to do so early, before an aggressive country has overrun its region, by maintaining strong alliances in peacetime. Americans may eventually forget that lesson as the generations that won World War II and the Cold War pass on. But for now, it continues to shape U.S. foreign policy, especially toward China. When American policymakers observe China trying to redraw the map of East Asia, supporting Russia's invasion of Ukraine, or locking ethnic minorities in concentration camps, they see not just a series of policy disagreements but a multifaceted assault on the order that has undergirded U.S. security and prosperity for generations. With the stakes seemingly so high, compromise, even on a single issue, is hard for leaders on both sides to stomach.

***Readiness solves nuclear war, terror, and WMD prolif but ground forces are key.**

Bonds 17 [Timothy M. Bonds is vice president, Army Research Division, and director, RAND Arroyo Center. Bonds has served as a RAND vice president since 2011. Previously, he was deputy director of the Arroyo Center from 2003 to 2011, acting director from March 2009 to May 2010, and, from 1999 to 2003, director of the Aerospace Force Development Program within RAND Project AIR FORCE. Prior to joining RAND, Bonds spent nine years in the aerospace industry, where he led projects to develop high-speed vehicle and weapons concepts. He holds an M.S. in aero/astro engineering from the University of Illinois and an M.B.A. from Washington University, St. Louis. Limiting Regret: Building the Army We Will Need--An Update. Testimony presented before the House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces on March 1, 2017. https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/testimonies/CT400/CT466/RAND_CT466.pdf]

For our first example, what might happen if the United States does not continue its missions to defeat ISIL, al Qaeda, the Taliban, and other violent extremist groups around the world? One potential regret is enduring terror movements that continue to destabilize vulnerable nations and whole regions; harm captured peoples; exploit captured territory to train terrorists, raise funds, and attract new recruits; and export violence to the United States and its allies and friends.

It remains unknown whether currently deployed forces are sufficient to achieve U.S. objectives. In fact, the United States has steadily increased troop deployments to Iraq and Syria and extended the mission in Afghanistan. However, this analysis assumes that U.S. ground forces will remain engaged at their current levels against extremist groups in order to continue to degrade them. Therefore, we assume here that these troops could not be pulled away for other operations without ending this mission. It is also possible that countering violent extremists will require more troops if the mission changes—for example, if additional ground troops are committed to combat operations, such as those in Syria and Iraq. Total troop requirements would remain those shown earlier as the worldwide commitments.

For our second example, how might Russia take the same course in the Baltics that it has taken in Ukraine? Russian “volunteers” could enter and destabilize Estonia and Latvia, or worse, conventional forces could launch a surprise invasion and present a fait accompli to NATO. We estimate that against currently stationed forces, the Russians could reach the Baltic capitals in 36–60 hours. That would leave the President with few and bad choices. The President could negotiate for the Russians to leave and risk the fracture of NATO if negotiations and sanctions drag on for months or years, or the President could choose to launch a counteroffensive to retake NATO territory—against a nuclear-armed Russia that has threatened first use of nuclear weapons to defend its territory from conventional attack and prevent its military from being destroyed. While the risk of war with Russia is small, and the risks of escalation to nuclear conflict are smaller still, neither risk is zero. Since the human and financial costs of both would be catastrophic, it is prudent to hedge against them.

Instead, NATO—and the United States—might place armored brigades in the Baltics. These armored brigades, along with other U.S. and NATO forces able to quickly deploy on warning, would be capable of denying Russia a quick victory. Such forces could be permanently stationed or rotationally deployed. These ground forces would be supported by air and sea power from the United States and its NATO allies. The European Reassurance Initiative and the four NATO battalion tactical groups deployed to Poland and the Baltics have made an important statement of alliance commitment and an initial “down payment” on the forces needed, but are not yet close to the amounts required to deny Russia a quick overrun of the Baltics.

If the Russians attacked under this scenario, the United States and NATO would send air, sea, and land reinforcements to deny a Russian victory. Additional U.S. and NATO forces would be needed to defeat Russian forces and reverse any Russian territorial gains.

We will now assess the numbers of ground forces needed for the missions described above. We will begin with continuing infrastructure tasks, including training new troops, supporting joint missions, and current overseas missions. Adding the forces supporting current missions, we have a demand for 434,000 soldiers to support infrastructure tasks and current missions. This includes the troops who are rotationally deployed; those forward-stationed in Europe, South Korea, and other places; and those supporting generating- and strategic-force operations (but who are not in the GRF or available for other missions). How large of an additional force would be required to deter and defeat aggression in the Baltics (shown here in orange)? For the deterrent force, we estimate that a total of three armored brigades would be needed on the ground in the Baltics on the day fighting started, along with the two U.S. brigades and supporting soldiers already in Europe, and two other U.S. Army and NATO rapid reaction brigades (the 82nd Airborne GRF and the NATO Very High Readiness Task Force) that can deploy to the Baltics on warning. In the future, our NATO allies should be able to provide one or more of the three armored brigades needed. However, in the near term, it is unlikely that any one of these nations would be able to sustain a deployed armored brigade. Therefore, we assume that the U.S. would need to deploy two more armored brigades and a fires brigade in addition to the forward stationed forces already in Europe and the armored and aviation brigades already deployed in a “heel to toe” fashion. In total, 36,000 additional soldiers would be needed over and above those already forward stationed or rotationally deployed to Europe. When deployed at a 1:2 rotation ratio, keeping 36,000 soldiers on the ground in the Baltics requires 108,000 soldiers to maintain a continuous presence. Including the 283,000 soldiers forward deployed in or rotating to Europe and other theaters, and the 151,000 soldiers engaged in infrastructure activities, a total of 542,000 soldiers would be required for these activities alone. This number exceeds the 476,000 soldiers now planned for the regular Army, forcing the DoD to reduce day-to-day operations, continuously deploy 66,000 National Guard or Army Reserve soldiers, grow the regular Army, or take some combination of these measures. Worse, this leaves no margin for higher demands if deterrence fails and war breaks out in Europe, Korea, or elsewhere in the world. In wartime, therefore, the DoD might be compelled to suspend troop rotations to maintain sufficient numbers of forces to meet contingency needs. From this point on in this testimony, we will discuss wartime demand, with troops deployed without rotation for the duration of a conflict. Such extended deployments for the duration of the conflict will impose extraordinary strain on troops and their families. (We should also note that some troop rotation will still be needed within theaters, so battle-worn units can pull back from the line for rest, refit, and replacement of casualties). If troop rotations to all theaters are suspended, including the deterrent force in the Baltics, troop demands will decline somewhat. The additional demand in the Baltics would decline to the 36,000 soldiers deployed at any one time; demand for the combination of other theaters would decline to 146,000, while the demand for infrastructure forces would remain steady at 151,000 soldiers. The total troops needed for these missions would decline to 334,000 soldiers when on a wartime footing. Additional troops would be needed if the Russians were not deterred and decided to invade. To expel the invading Russian forces, we estimate that an additional 85,000 U.S. troops, including six armored brigades and associated artillery, aviation, headquarters, and other supporting troops, would be needed to defeat a Russian invasion (shown in brown), along with eight brigades and a similar number of troops from our NATO allies. This raises the total U.S. troops needed to around 420,000 soldiers. This includes soldiers tasked to conduct infrastructure missions, continue current missions around the world, and deploy the U.S. contribution to the NATO deterrent and war-winning forces shown above. Once again, this assumes a wartime footing for all of these troops with no rotations of soldiers. We now turn to a third example—a war resulting from a provocation cycle that escalates to a North Korean attack on South Korea. Current DoD force planning

seems to focus on an invasion threat to South Korea from North Korean forces, as depicted on the map. But the threat is changing. A provocation cycle could escalate out of control and lead to an artillery barrage of Seoul, involving some of the 10,000 artillery pieces and multiple rocket launchers, firing from hardened positions that the DoD believes to be in range of South Korea.¹⁰ Or North Korea might collapse as a result of war or economic failure, leaving up to 200 nuclear, chemical, and biological program sites unsecured (as represented by dots on the map above).¹¹ In either event, a significant burden would fall on U.S. forces. To counter North Korean artillery, U.S. ground forces would need to provide forces to evacuate U.S. noncombatants; engineering, logistics, and maneuver units to sustain South Korean and U.S. operations to clear artillery within range of Seoul; WMD-elimination task forces to secure chemical or nuclear munitions deployed with artillery units; and ground combat forces to protect each of these types of units. South Korean forces would also be stretched to gain control over North Korean military forces, exert political control over territory captured, and deal with a massive humanitarian catastrophe—all at a time when the South Korean Army is decreasing in size by one-third from its peak.

For these reasons, countering an artillery barrage or North Korean WMDs would require significant U.S. ground forces.

Plan—1AC

Plan: The United States ought to require that U.S military workers receive a living wage.

It addresses food insecurity, housing concerns, and healthcare—it's the only holistic recruitment tactic.

Pontoon 24 [Brendan, reporter at News 3. He joined the team in August 2014 after spending two years at WHSV-TV in Harrisonburg. University of Maryland. May 15, 2024, "Proposal would give junior enlisted service members 15% pay bump", News 3 WTKR Norfolk, <https://www.wtkr.com/news/military/proposal-would-give-junior-enlisted-service-members-15-pay-bump>; roshan]

As News 3 has reported, about a quarter of active duty service members are considered food insecure, meaning they don't have access to enough food or adequate food.

"When our service members are answering the call to serve, they're constantly deployed or constantly in a training posture. That exacerbated financial strain can take a toll on military families," said McDonald, who's also a Government Affairs Specialist at Secure Families Initiative.

Members of Congress are getting ready to take up the next defense spending bill, which will address pay.

"I don't think the pay that military members get is adequate. That's evidenced by a lot of things," said Rep. Jen Kiggans (R-Virginia).

Of particular focus are junior enlisted service members who are just beginning their careers.

Compensation for a Sailor in the E1 rank comes out to about \$70,000 a year, which includes their salary, housing allowance, food allowances, as well as health and dental care, according to the Navy's website.

"This is an all-volunteer force. We know that military recruitment is challenged right now, so we're trying to find ways that we can bridge those gaps," said Kiggans.

Due to moving and childcare costs, many military families are also one-income households.

"I'll never say that the military doesn't deserve a raise. We do need to make a living wage," said McDonald.

The most recently passed defense budget did give service members a 5.2-percent raise, the highest in 20 years, but Kiggans says more needs to be done.

The House Armed Services Committee recently released a report examining quality of life, including pay. One of the recommendations is to give service members between E1 and E4 a 15-percent raise.

Wages are key.

1. RECRUIT QUALITY—It's empirically verified.

Hosek et al. 18 [James Hosek, Beth J. Asch, Michael G. Mattock, Troy D. Smith Dec 3, 2018, "Military and Civilian Pay Levels, Trends, and Recruit Quality", RAND, https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2396.html; roshan]

In the all-volunteer military, pay is one of the most important policy tools for recruiting and retaining personnel. Military pay must be high enough to attract and retain the personnel needed to meet manning requirements, and one measure of pay adequacy is how it compares to the pay of civilians with similar characteristics.

In 2002, the Ninth Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation recommended that regular military compensation (RMC) for enlisted personnel be at around the 70th percentile of the earnings of civilian workers with some college and, for officers, at around the 70th percentile of earnings of civilians with four or more years of college.

RAND researchers found RMC for enlisted members and officers in 2016 to be at the 84th and 77th percentiles, respectively, averaged over all education levels. RMC was at the 87th percentile for enlisted members with some college and at the 85th for those with associate's degrees. For officers, RMC was at the 86th percentile for those with bachelor's degrees and around the 70th for those with master's degrees or higher. Controlling for the change in education levels among service members, the researchers also found the same overall percentiles for 2009.

RMC has risen faster than civilian pay since 1999. The researchers found that, as this occurred, three military services (but not the Army) increased the quality of their recruits. The authors recommend further research into services' recruit-quality requirements and question whether broad increases in pay are cost-effective for increasing quality.

Key Findings

The regular military compensation (RMC) percentile for 2016 was above the 70th percentile

In 2016, the overall RMC percentile was at the 84th percentile for enlisted personnel and the 77th percentile for officers.

RMC for enlisted members was at the 87th percentile on average for those with some college and the 85th percentile for those with associate degrees.

For officers, RMC was at the 86th percentile for those with bachelor's degrees and around the 70th percentile for those with master's degrees or higher.

The RMC percentile was about the same in 2016 as in 2009

The overall RMC percentiles in 2009 for enlisted personnel and officers are virtually the same as for 2016.

RMC increased steadily relative to civilian wages from 2000 to 2010 and leveled off afterward. Civilian wages adjusted for inflation trended down from 2000 to 2013, although they have tended to increase since 2013.

Recruit quality rose in three services as the RMC/wage ratio increased

Recruit quality is positively associated with the RMC/wage ratio for the Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force but not the Army.

***It facilitates operational advantages that create flexible forces.**

Gerras 16 [Stephen Gerras, Leonard Wong, professor of behavioral sciences in the Department of Command, Leadership, and Management at the U.S. Army War

College and research professor in the Strategic Studies Institute at the U.S. Army War College, “AMERICA’S ARMY: MEASURING QUALITY SOLDIERS AND QUALITY OFFICERS”, War on the Rocks, <https://warontherocks.com/2016/04/americas-army-measuring-quality-soldiers-and-quality-officers/>; roshan]

After four decades of the great experiment called the All-Volunteer Army, it has become abundantly clear that **recruiting** and retaining **quality soldiers** is a **vital prerequisite** to the **success of America’s Army**. While **superior American technology**, **competent training**, and **efficient logistics** are undoubtedly **critical aspects** of battlefield dominance, it is the Army’s **resolute reliance on high quality officers and soldiers** that has **kept** the All-Volunteer Army the **world’s premier fighting force**. One might assume — given the critical national security role of the Army — that consistent, rigorous metrics are part of the accessions effort for soldiers and commissioned officers. Surprisingly, quality metrics in enlisted accessions are measured and monitored closely, while quality metrics for officer accessions are uneven and oftentimes meaningless. Thus, despite the Army’s focus on achieving cognitive dominance on the future battlefield, officer accession quality standards are inconsistent, sometimes non-existent, and not on par with enlisted accession standards. **American enlisted soldier quality, as defined by the Department of Defense, is measured by two fairly straightforward indicators: a high school diploma and performance on the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT)**. A high school diploma is a metric that, at first blush, appears to characterize academic success. Rather than indicating intellectual ability, however, the high school diploma provides evidence that a potential soldier has the persistence and stamina to complete an enduring challenge. A diploma is merely a proxy for perseverance and motivation. It serves as a signal that candidates have the stick-to-it-iveness required to make it through their basic training and term of enlistment. **The AFQT score, on the other hand, reflects aptitude and trainability**. The AFQT score points to a potential soldier’s capacity to learn and master new skills. AFQT scores are percentiles that are normalized to the American youth population. A score of 60 represents the 60th percentile and means that 60 percent of the U.S. youth population scored at or below that score. The **Army strives to bring in as many high quality soldiers** — those having both high school diplomas and AFQT scores above the 50th percentile — as possible. **But the Army’s quest for high quality is more than just wanting to populate the ranks with above-average individuals**. In fact, the case for quality is remarkably well supported. Empirical **studies** have **shown** that **high-quality soldiers** are **more likely** than **low-quality soldiers** to **complete** their **enlistment** and will have **fewer instances of indiscipline** during their time in the Army. Additionally, the **evidence** repeatedly confirms that high-quality soldiers — those with higher levels of motivation and aptitude — **perform better** in training and **execute complex military tasks** more proficiently. **Studies show that high-quality soldiers make better communication specialists, Patriot air defense missile operators, and Abrams tank crewmen**. If soldier quality is an **essential ingredient** in fielding a force that will confidently confront the ambiguity and **complexity of future war**, how is the Army currently doing in accessing high-quality soldiers? For fiscal year 2015, Army recruiting numbers show that 60.2 percent of Army enlisted accessions had a high school diploma and an AFQT score of 50 or better. Although the Army has seen both better and worse years (for example, 76.4 percent high-quality in FY92 and 44.2 percent in FY07), it is important to note two critical aspects of the Army’s focus on high-quality accessions. First, the Army carefully tracks the quality of its enlisted accessions over time. As a result, **quality metrics may prompt senior leaders to redirect resources or adjust policies in order to ensure recruit quality**. Second, including a normed aptitude score in the definition of quality accounts for societal shifts in aptitude. Essentially, enlisted soldier quality is “inflation-adjusted,” allowing comparisons over time.

2. RETENTION—Maintaining indifference to squalid conditions forces turnover to the civilian sector.

Hadley 24 [Greg, News Editor of Air & Space Forces Magazine. A graduate of the University of Notre Dame, he has more than seven years of experience in national and local media, working for The State (Columbia, S.C.) and the McClatchy D.C. Bureau. 6-11-2024, "Pay Raise for Junior Enlisted Faces White House Opposition, High Cost Estimates", Air & Space Forces Magazine, <https://www.airandspaceforces.com/pay-raise-junior-enlisted-white-house-cbo-estimates/>; roshan]

"Many of our junior enlisted are struggling to afford housing; as housing costs have gone up, their pay has not kept pace," said Rep. Adam Smith (D-Wash.), ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee. "This is a bold step to try and make sure that we support them, which incidentally will also help with recruitment and retention."

But while many House lawmakers support the pay raise, it will also need to make it through the Senate. The Senate Armed Services Committee is set to take up its version of the NDAA this week, and once both bills clear the full chambers, they must be reconciled in conference, meaning the pay increase may remain up in the air for months to come.

The proposal originated from the HASC's Quality of Life panel, led by Air Force veterans Rep. Don Bacon (R-Neb.) and Rep. Chrissy Houlahan (D-Penn.), who argued in their final report issued in April that the boost was needed to keep pace with increasing wages for civilian low-income jobs.

3. DEMOGRAPHICS—Future wage-spikes are unavoidable from prime-age population shortages, but now is key for global readiness—other solutions fail.

Ferrari 24 [John G, American Enterprise Institute, March 19, 2024, nonresident senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, where his work focuses on the defense budget, defense reform and acquisition, and the US military. Ferrari is a retired major general and former director of program analysis and evaluation for the US Army, <https://www.aei.org/research-products/report/mcdonalds-or-the-army-a-california-case-study/>; roshan]

The military is mired in a recruiting crisis that is mostly unparalleled in the all-volunteer force's 50-year history.¹ This could hardly come at a worse time; the world is wracked with conflict and desperate for American leadership to cool tensions and deter future war.² Amid all this, the mainstay of our nation's combat power, the Army, has been hit hardest of all the services by recruiting woes, shrinking it to its smallest size since before World War II.³ There is no shortage of ideas on how to solve the service's recruiting crisis, with revising medical and screening mechanisms being worthy candidates among them.⁴ But sometimes, the best solution is the most obvious one: raising pay.

The need for a large increase in junior enlisted wages becomes apparent when one considers two issues: the looming demographic cliff for America's youth and competition from the labor market.⁵ According to the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources, it is projected

that between 2025 and 2029, the US will see its **population of 18-year-olds drop** from **9.4 million** to roughly **8 million**, a **15 percent decrease**.⁶

This **15 percent drop** will likely **contribute to two pressures** that will **make** today's **recruiting challenges** even **worse**. First, basic **economics** predicts that **as the number of 18- to 22-year-olds declines**, the **wages required to employ them will increase**. Therefore, **whatever the pay deficit is today**, it will **become increasingly worse** in **coming years**. Second, it is **reasonable to conclude** that **as the nation's number of 18-year-olds drops**, the **military will have to shift its recruiting efforts to older recruits**. The RAND Corporation makes this case in an article published in 2023.⁷ **Older recruits are likely to require a wage premium to join**. Given today's recruiting difficulties and these looming future challenges, **there will be a serious need for the military to dramatically raise its entry-level wages**.

Advantage—1AC

Advantage 2 is Talent.

Technical talent is bottlenecked---the ability to leverage technology is the backbone of geopolitical competition.

Sheppard et al. **20** [Lindsey R. Sheppard, Morgan Dwyer, Melissa Dalton, and Angelina Hidalgo, 11-23-2020, "To Compete, Invest in People: Retaining the U.S. Defense Enterprise's Technical Workforce", CSIS Briefs, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/compete-invest-people-retaining-us-defense-enterprises-technical-workforce>; roshan]

The U.S. defense enterprise has an impressive history of science, engineering, and innovation; however, today, it struggles to retain its technical talent. U.S. defense organizations face issues onboarding technical talent, leveraging talent in support of defense missions, and developing and promoting technical talent within defense organizations. Without addressing these retention issues, the defense enterprise will continue operating largely as a set of industrial-age institutions that leverage technology ineffectively rather than as twenty-first century organizations where technology and technologists are managed like a strategic asset. Therefore, to modernize and compete, the defense enterprise must invest in people—including technical talent—by proactively addressing retention barriers and adopting a holistic approach to talent management.

Investing in People

Geopolitical competition and the nature of modern warfare are increasingly shaped by technology. Recent modernization efforts across the defense enterprise—which created technical centers of excellence within the Department of Defense (DOD), built stronger relationships with Silicon Valley and other tech hubs, and included DOD's largest investment in research and development in 70 years—embrace this technical future.¹ However, to fully modernize and compete effectively, the U.S. defense enterprise also needs to invest in people.

For the purposes of this brief, the people in the defense enterprise include both civil servants and members of the armed forces who are employed by the U.S. military branches (i.e., the Army, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard), defense agencies (e.g., the Missile Defense Agency and Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency), and defense headquarters (e.g., the Office of the Secretary of Defense and combatant commands). Although the defense ecosystem—including companies, universities, and federally funded research and development labs—makes essential contributions to national defense, this brief focuses on people directly employed by the federal government.

Recent recommendations, including those by the Future Defense Task Force, the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), and the Reagan Foundation have discussed a broad requirement for professionals of all science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) backgrounds.² Others, however, including the Cyberspace Solarium Commission, the Defense Innovation Board, the National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence (NSCAI), and the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service have focused on specific skill sets, including digital, artificial intelligence, and cyber.³

This brief takes an expansive approach to STEM talent but notes that the defense enterprise currently lacks a common definition or requirements that specify why the federal government should employ STEM professionals. For instance, the defense enterprise may wish to recruit and retain STEM professionals to:

- **Leverage data** to improve **decision quality**;
- Conduct **basic science and technology research**;
- **Design and/or develop** certain types of **systems** (e.g., reference architectures for major defense programs or prototypes);
- **Buy and operate technology** more **effectively**; and
- Enhance diversity of thought across organizations.

In filling these roles, for example, STEM professionals could be **aerospace engineers** who conduct **basic research on hypersonic flight**. They may also be **software developers** who support **humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations** by writing the code for fire line mapping drones. Finally, they could also be **mathematicians** who support **signals intelligence** collection and analysis.

The importance of **educating and recruiting STEM talent to support defense and national security** missions was highlighted by several recent reports. For example, the **Future Defense Task Force recommends that the U.S. government support primary education** and that DOD improve “**hiring pathways,**” **increase pay**, and shorten security clearance processes for **STEM professionals**.⁴ Similarly, **CFR recommends expanding the STEM talent pipeline through investments in national education initiatives, scholarships, and fellowships**.⁵ The Reagan Foundation recommends creating a “STEM Corps” in which STEM students would commit to a career in national security in exchange for tuition reimbursement.⁶ The National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service, the Cyberspace Solarium Commission, and the NSCAI also recommend similar steps.

Operational talent can’t keep up with modernization—high-skilled workers are key.

Thomas 22 [Ian Thomas, M.A, business journalism, 5-5-2022, “The U.S. Army is struggling to find the recruits its needs to win the fight over the future”, CNBC, <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/10/26/us-army-struggles-to-find-recruits-its-needs-to-win-fight-of-future.html>; roshan]

The U.S. **Army** is **spending more than ever** before **on technology** to replace an **aging military infrastructure**, from **artificial intelligence** to **new fighting machines moving 1980s tanks off the field of battle**. But the **Secretary of the U.S. Army** says the nation **risks falling behind in the race against China if it can’t recruit** enough **Americans** into the service **to be trained on how national defense is being remade for future conflicts**. “We **can develop** all of the most **high-tech new weapons systems**, like we are **working on** right now, **but** if we **don’t have** the **kinds of talented motivated individuals to use** those weapons **systems**, we won’t be able to **do what we need to do**,” U.S. Army Secretary Christine Wormuth said at the CNBC Work Summit on Wednesday. As the **gap between the number of job openings and the number of job seekers has remained wide**, the tight labor market has made it increasingly difficult for businesses both big and small to find and hire the right workers. That has also impacted the U.S. Army, which as the largest branch of the U.S. military has a current workforce of 466,400. “**We’re**

competing for talent just like all of the **folks in industry** are, and the job market is hot right now,” Wormuth told CNBC’s Morgan Brennan on Wednesday at the CNBC event. “**Wages** have **gone up** a lot, and that’s **great for Americans**, but it’s **making it harder** for us in the **Army to compete**.” The **Army missed its recruitment goal for fiscal 2022** by 25% or 15,000 soldiers, the military service said earlier this month. In July, it also cut its projection for the overall size of its force for this fiscal year by 10,000 and projected that it would likely see another decline in 2023. While the other branches of the military have also had trouble recruiting, none have been as pronounced as the Army’s difficulties, which Wormuth attributed to a variety of factors, including learning losses due to the pandemic and a decline in fitness standards among American youth. “Only about 23% of kids between 16 and 21 are able to meet our standards, and some of that, frankly, is reflective of the problem that we have in our country with obesity,” she said, adding that behavioral health and misconduct are also factors. A second “**really hard problem**” cited by Wormuth is what the Army calls “**propensity to serve**,” which is inclination among the population to join the military and serve the country. “Right now, only 9% of young Americans say that they’re interested in joining the military,” she said. Wormuth, who became the first woman to serve as Army Secretary in May, said the service has already started a variety of efforts to boost near-term recruitment. “The Future Soldier Prep Course,” which is effectively a pre-boot camp that helps potential recruits raise their test scores and get more physically fit to meet Army standards, is one. This program “shows a lot of promise,” Wormuth said. However, changing the broader propensity of Americans to serve in the military is a challenge that is a much longer-term. One misperception that has to be overcome is about what employment in the military looks like.

Wage innovation skyrockets talent recruiting—key to tech leadership and the DIB.

Henderson 20 [Clarence Henderson, 3-9-2020, Col. Clarence J. Henderson is the owner of a construction company in Houston, TX and understands the dynamics of labor pools. He has commanded at all levels through an IBCT within the reserve components and is a veteran of multiple deployments to Iraq, Afghanistan, and the southwest border., "The Army in a New Era of Competition—for Labor," Modern War Institute, <https://mwi.westpoint.edu/army-new-era-competition-labor/>, accessed: 6-25-2024, condensed for readability] // sid

In an era of contested equality **the ability to merge new and novel technologies will create the exponential change within operational environments needed to maintain superiority. Robotics, the Internet of things, and artificial intelligence, among others—these are the technologies that will have profound effects on warfare, society, and industry.** and will have even more profound effects as they converge. For the Army, being able to converge effects in multiple domains will require continuous renewal on two fronts: how to conceive convergence of new technological effects; and how to execute such convergences at the operational level. The planners and operators who will do the converging must possess the cognitive capacity to maintain pace with technological change. As the Army accelerates innovation and technology development within its modernization priorities it must ensure leaders enter into a continuous learning cycle beyond branch and functional expertise. Leaders at all echelons must possess a propensity to understand technological convergence across all domains, and how to drive technological change when a gap is identified. **The labor pool that must accommodate convergence of technologies is shaping now. A younger class of innovators is developing across the United States astute in STEM fields—science, technology, engineering, and math.** Secondary educational institutions have **mobilized to produce programs that focus learning in these fields. This is the labor pool the Army and industry will compete for.** Just as the Army will converge **technological effects to destroy a threat**, so too will private industry converge **technology to simplify business processes and connect with their markets.** And it won’t be the aging labor market providing the expertise of how to converge these technologies. That expertise will originate from the new generation of innovators possessing a new generation of talent. Socioeconomics **Technology can enable regional and global economic progress.** There is a socioeconomic convergence taking place, as well, whereby the effects of technology, new and increasingly accessible markets, and growing urban populations are combining to provide labor pools for expanding regional industrial bases and produce new economies. In the traditional sense, a new economy is a transition from heavy industrial manufacturing to technology-driven service-based industries. Today, these new economies include production

powered by robotics, cloud computing, and big data, among other digital technologies. A new manufacturing economy and a skilled workforce are areas of strategic importance for the future defense industrial base and the Army. Manufacturing dominance that was once an American advantage is now a strategic concern—so much so that the National Security Strategy specifies the need to prepare American workers for high-wage manufacturing STEM jobs. Emerging technologies will continue to drive the need for skilled workers and transform production. Globally, manufacturing is growing and accounts for approximately 16 percent of global GDP. And this transformation will enable new manufacturing economies to create new worth for both the manufacturing industry and the societies within which it resides. As these economies emerge, the reciprocal effect will be to drive more innovation for new manufacturing technologies to increase manufacturing dominance. New manufacturing economies critical to the defense industrial base will rely on a skilled workforce. From October 2018 to December 2019 the US manufacturing industry has hovered at a deficit of between 350,000 and 500,000 job openings. Key to filling these positions is a technology-savvy workforce. By 2028, that number could rise to as many as 2.4 million unfilled manufacturing jobs as the tech-based sector continues to grow. With economic growth and an aging workforce the opportunities for a career in modern manufacturing will be attractive. The average manufacturing employee earns 25 percent more in pay and benefits than the average worker across all industries; and the work is high-tech, hands-on, and fulfilling. High-tech manufacturing corporations are organizing to locate the needed technological aptitudes and literacy. Managers skilled in blockchain and agile project management and employees skilled in mechanical, electrical, and digital competencies will be recruited. And the new manufacturing economy is mobilizing for a labor war to offer this talent a promising career, as evidenced by the emergence of innovation ecosystems across the United States. For instance, Houston, Texas, a disproportionate source of Army recruits, has raised twenty-five million dollars from nine corporate limited partners to go get the talent. Workforces The final convergence is within the workforce that must respond to the needs of new technologies and emerging economies. No longer are data scientists relegated to the tech industry. Today, software engineers imbued with real knowledge in agile software development and data scientists proficient in structured and unstructured data analysis have infiltrated the non-tech sectors. Conversely, the technology industries themselves are looking outside of solely tech-minded competencies to solicit management talent to fill a growing array of roles. The US Army must converge the aptitudes of technological literacy and social intelligence among three primary labor pools to create a dynamic workforce: within its own ranks, through public-private partnerships, and from coalition partners. The Army's recruitment, development, and retention of the new generation of labor will provide access to information literacy and technological aptitudes required for the future force. But, especially in a strong economy, this population of talent will have to be accommodated with real incentives beyond Army social programs. Next, public-private partnerships can provide access to critical skills and expand access to outside expertise by working with corporations, startups, and universities. The labor pool that such outreach is aimed at reaching will need to be incentivized to work with the Army and hiring contingent workforces from this population should be investigated. Finally, there is the labor pool composed of talent provided from our allies and partners. They can infuse our workforce with regional viewpoints necessary to expand our understanding of the operational environment. Contemporary businesses are already converging workforces. They enact faster business processes to maintain pace with the global market. To do this, agility methods have been adopted to adjust and respond to information in order to maintain pace. Business agility empowers organizations to leverage networked technologies to respond rapidly to the operating environment's changes. This management style has become a model for uniting social and technological competencies and it is needed within the US Army to complement convergent workforces. A burgeoning class of young, global professionals who possess this management style is emerging. These new professionals participate in the international free market, understand complex relationships, operate within the megacities of the world, and rapidly adapt to the ubiquitous use of new technologies. And they should become a primary target in the oncoming labor wars. Training for the World The US Army is a task-based institution. Entry-level training is conducted, an occupational skill is acquired, and soldiers are managed within a branch. This approach to work is fading among younger labor pools. A new "portfolio of experience" movement is shaping workforces for industries in need of convergent skills. The Army too should work to build a force of diverse portfolios replete with tech-minded warriors distributed in all billets. This means placing less emphasis on the Army's "skills match" strategy, and more emphasis on continuous learning and credentialing at the same scale as the private sector. In complex convergent environments the force that possesses the right diversity of disciplines wins. For instance, the technology industry now employs varied disciplines and is maturing to more traditional non-tech jobs of executives, project managers, operations managers, financial analysts, and marketing managers. Developing portfolios of experience is not what the Army does. One may be tempted to argue that broadening opportunities and functional-area expertise engender diverse experiences. But these tend to be pathways to known problem sets in institutions often culminating with the end of a career. A portfolio of experience is dependent upon continuous learning and aggressive (distributed) assignments. And continuous learning must transcend all occupational specialties. Real continuous learning would enable a soldier to maintain pace with a peer working in a private-sector company that exists, functions, and survives within complex environments. Industry certifications, qualifications, and advanced degrees are a matter of routine process for global professionals. And they should be for every soldier as well. For instance, it's inconceivable that a Warfighter Exercise, the Army's premier virtual, multi-echelon exercise requiring months-long train-ups, leaves its participants with no credentialing to maintain pace with private-sector industry. Every Warfighter should result in Scrum, SAFe, and Kanban Management Professional certifications. Anyone with access to data (everyone) should walk away with big-data proficiencies in Hadoop, SAS, Cloudera, or SQL, and even become a Certified Data Management Professional. Credentialing in software coding, security information management, IT infrastructure management, cloud computing, and cyber security are technological competencies that constitute real continuous learning. Both officers and enlisted alike need these skills, among many others. If you don't believe the Army is struggling with continuous learning then go visit a military job fair. These gestures of good will are a testament to the failure of the military to properly care for its human capital. Job fairs are an antiquated, twentieth-century way of seeking entry-level employment. Any soldiers who exit the Army at four years or more should be fully credentialed and certified to seamlessly participate within industry without needing to reinvent themselves. But more than prepping for life after service, building the future force will require continuous learning now in order to adapt to the operational environment and drive innovation. The Labor Wars: More Contested and More Complex Talent is a critical resource and as people are attracted to the best

opportunities that talent will become scarce. Corporations are competing for an educated workforce, and cities are in turn competing to attract these corporations to strengthen their communities. This is where a sort of “perfect storm” characterizing the new labor war has begun: corporations are recruited by regional economies, who in turn leverage their influence within regional ecosystems to acquire the best talent—the same talent that the Army will require. The Army must maintain its total **active- and reserve-component** force of just over one million personnel in order to possess the capacity to conduct future **large-scale, decisive-action** operations. This will require **competing against a US economy** that currently has over six million unfilled jobs and an unemployment rate below 3 percent in several metropolitan areas. High-tech industries have become an essential part of these economies. By 2016, nearly 10 percent of all jobs accounting for over 18 percent of production output were attributed to high-tech industries. Currently, employment sectors within high-tech industries **pay higher wages** than other industries. Also, continued advances in manufacturing technologies and production processes are expected to accelerate innovation and have significant implications for labor markets through 2030. The challenge for the Army **is** clear: the **domestic tech sector** will attract **critical talent** for the next ten years, just as the Army is seeking to produce “the Army of 2028.” The high-quality recruit of today is fully aware of opportunities in the private sector. The **wages alone** provide a **compelling case** to forgo military service. Not only does, the Bureau of Labor Statistics records higher median wages in high-tech industries than in non-high-tech industries across every major occupational group, but emphasis in STEM fields further elevates salaries. So, while the Army talks the talent will walk. And the data is starting to show this. For the first time since 2005 the Army missed its **recruiting goal in 2018**, falling 6,500 active-duty recruits short of its goal for the fiscal year; that same year saw a deficit of eight thousand in the National Guard and nine thousand in the Army Reserve. The Army is focusing on taking high-quality recruits and this undoubtedly affects onboarding talent. But in the midst of a strong economy **the Army, and DoD** as a whole, **are going to have to make real modifications** to attract the talent needed.

Ceding tech leadership causes global backsliding and digital authoritarianism

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Democracy Prevention

The PRC wrote its first formal national-security strategy under Xi, in 2014.¹⁴ Whereas **regime security** used to be one of many government priorities (albeit the most important), it **is now the priority**.¹⁵ All other issues—**trade, diplomacy, military modernization**—are **adjuncts** to **keeping the CCP in power**. As a result, every issue is a matter of regime security. A trade war with rich democracies is no longer just an economic disagreement; it is an **assault** on the **Chinese state** and a possible **prelude** to a **shooting war**.

Whereas previous Chinese administrations espoused “stability maintenance,” the focus under Xi is on **threat prevention**. **Chinese documents compare popular outbursts to cancerous tumors** that need to be **cut** out **quickly** before they spread to vital organs of the state. Ideologies that could **rival communism**, including liberalism and Islamism, are seen as **infectious diseases** against which China’s population must be **immunized**. As Sheena Chestnut Greitens has shown, these medical metaphors justify targeting and

“treating” people long before they display threatening symptoms.¹⁶ The clearest illustration is in Xinjiang, where China has extrajudicially locked up more than a million Uyghurs.¹⁷ But China is applying this **preventive logic** beyond its borders too.

Beijing spends billions of dollars annually on an **“antidemocratic toolkit”** of nongovernmental organizations, media outlets, diplomats, advisors, hackers, and bribes all designed to prop up autocrats and **sow discord** in democracies.¹⁸ The CCP provides fellow **autocracies with guns, money, and protection** from UN censure while **slapping** foreign **human-rights advocates** with sanctions. Chinese officials offer their **authoritarian brethren** riot-control gear and **advice on building a surveillance state**; PRC trade, investment, and loans allow those dictators to avoid Western conditionality regarding anticorruption or good governance.

Beijing uses its globe-spanning media organs to tout the accomplishments of illiberal rule while highlighting democratic governments’ flaws and hypocrisies. China works with fellow authoritarian regimes, such as Vladimir Putin’s in Russia, to push autocrat-friendly norms of internet management in international institutions and standards-setting bodies. Beijing also helps other illiberal regimes near or in Central Asia to hound and repress exiles and dissidents. Not least, China is waging a campaign of political and military coercion to destabilize Taiwan, a flourishing nation whose very existence disproves the CCP’s claims that Chinese culture is incompatible with democracy. The fundamental problem that Taiwan poses for China, write Andrew Nathan and Andrew Scobell, “comes from Taiwan’s simply being what it is—a modern Chinese society that is economically prosperous and politically democratic.”¹⁹

It might be tempting to dismiss China’s democracy-prevention efforts as “world politics as usual.” After all, autocrats have been colluding to hold liberalism at bay ever since the monarchs of Austria, Prussia, and Russia banded together to fight Revolutionary France more than two centuries ago. But China’s ideological assault is especially threatening, for three reasons.

First, China’s global reach is more pervasive than that of any prior illiberal power. Its massive economy and 1.4 billion consumers arm it with powerful **carrots and sticks** to silence free speech far **beyond its borders**. Australia, Canada, the Czech Republic, Japan, Lithuania, Norway, the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, and the United States—plus dozens of private companies and individuals from democratic nations—have recently experienced China’s economic wrath. In many cases, the punishment has been vastly disproportionate to the supposed crime. For example, China slapped steep tariffs on nearly all of Australia’s major exports after Canberra requested an international investigation into the origins of covid-19.

In addition to economic weapons, China holds leadership posts in the UN and other major international institutions that give Beijing chances to bend global governance in an illiberal direction. For example, when Belarus violated international norms by forcing down an airliner that was carrying a wanted dissident in 2021, China exercised its authority as head of the UN’s International Civil Aviation Organization to shield the brutal Alyaksandr Lukashenka regime from censure.²⁰ And if diplomacy and economic inducements fail, Beijing can use its navy, now the world’s largest, and conventional missile force to coerce countries into compliance or even to wipe democracies off the map, as China is threatening to do to Taiwan.

Second, China’s illiberal campaign capitalizes on a disturbing global trend: As Freedom House reports, **authoritarianism** has **spread** during every year since 2006, while democracy has retreated. This **“democratic recession”** has given China a **window of ideological opportunity** to promote a vision of a **hierarchical** and **harmonious society** and a critique of a disorderly and decadent West. Around the world, public faith in democratic institutions has sunk to lows not seen since the 1930s. The political soil has grown ripe for authoritarianism to take root, and China, Russia, and other

authoritarian states are fertilizing this antidemocratic plant with **digital disinformation** that their propagandists **pump** into the social-media feeds of **billions** worldwide.²¹

The third and most important factor **supercharging China's** efforts is the ongoing **digital revolution**.²² The CCP possesses data-collection and messaging power to rival that of Apple, Amazon, Facebook, Google, and Twitter.²³ **By combining** artificial intelligence (**AI**) and "**big data**" **with** cyber, biometric, and speech- and **facial-recognition technologies**, Beijing is pioneering a **system that will allow dictators to know everything about their subjects**—what people are saying and viewing, whom they hang out with, what they like and dislike, and where they are located at any given time—and to discipline citizens instantly by restricting their access to credit, education, employment, medical care, telecommunications, and travel if not to hunt them down for more medieval forms of punishment.

This **tech**nological **revolution threatens** to upend the **global balance** between democracy and authoritarianism by **making repression more affordable and effective than ever**.²⁴ Instead of relying on expensive and potentially rebellious armies to brutalize a resentful population, **an autocrat will now have more insidious means of control**. Millions of spies can be replaced with hundreds of millions of unblinking cameras. Facial-recognition technologies can rapidly sort through video feeds and identify troublemakers. Bots can deliver propaganda tailored to specific groups. Malware can be installed on computers through seemingly innocuous apps or links, and then government hackers can crash the computer networks of dissidents or gather information on their operations. **That information, in turn, can be used to coopt resistance movements by bribing their leaders or meeting their more innocuous demands**. Alternatively, authorities can print out an AI-assembled list of alleged activists and kill everyone on it.

The evil genius of **this "digital authoritarianism"** is that most people will be seemingly free to go about their daily lives. In truth, however, the state will be constantly censoring everything they see and tracking everything they do. With old-school authoritarianism, one at least knew where the oppression was coming from. But now **people can be nudged and cajoled by invisible algorithms delivering personalized content to their phones**. In past eras, autocrats had to make tough choices between funding death squads or economic development. Today, however, repression is not only affordable, but also profitable, because "smart-city" technologies that enable tight social control can also be used to fight crime, diagnose diseases, and make the trains run on time.

These technologies are a tyrant's dream. Recognizing this demand, Chinese companies were already selling and operating surveillance systems in more than eighty countries as of 2020.²⁵ As the CCP feels increasingly threatened at home and abroad, there is every reason to expect Beijing to export digital authoritarianism farther and wider. Many countries already want it, and China has powerful tools to compel those that do not. Want access to the vast PRC market? Let Huawei install the core components of your 5G network. Want a Chinese loan? Accept PRC surveillance technology in your capital city.

As more governments partner with Beijing, the reach of **China's surveillance state** will grow.²⁶ Existing autocracies will become **more totalitarian**, and **some democracies will drift** into the **authoritarian camp**. International **conflicts will likely proliferate**—not merely those of ideas but those of arms, for as Putin's invasion of Ukraine illustrates, dictatorship often turns to **blood-and-soil** nationalism and **violent revanchism**. The liberal belief that democracy and peace are destined to spread around the world will be upended. **So will the comforting myth that humanity has evolved past the point of mass atrocities, because digital authoritarianism does not displace gulags and genocide; it enables them**. When dictatorships ramp up **digital repression**, they also engage in

more torture and murder.²⁷ Computers and cameras handling everyday surveillance free the regime's foot soldiers for tasks such as ethnic cleansing and beating dissidents into submission. Xinjiang, with its smart cities and concentration camps, offers a glimpse of this dire future.²⁸

Extinction

Yuval Noah **Harari 20**, Professor, Department of History, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, "How to Survive the 21st Century: Three Existential Threats to Humanity," *Journal of Data Protection & Privacy*, vol. 3, no. 4, 03/11/2020, pp. 463–468

As we enter the third decade of the 21st century, humanity faces so many issues and questions, that it is really hard to know what to focus on. So I would like to use the next 20 minutes to help us focus on all the different issues we face. Three problems pose existential challenges to our species.

These three existential challenges are nuclear war, ecological collapse and technological disruption. We should focus on them.

Now nuclear war and ecological collapse are already familiar threats, so let me spend some time explaining the less-familiar threat posed by technological disruption.

In Davos, we hear so much about the enormous promises of technology — and these promises are certainly real. But technology might also disrupt human society and the very meaning of human life in numerous ways, ranging from the creation of a global useless class to the rise of data colonialism and of digital dictatorships.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC UPHEAVAL

Automation will soon eliminate millions upon millions of jobs, and while new jobs will certainly be created, it is unclear whether people will be able to learn the necessary new skills fast enough. Suppose you are a 50-year-old truck driver, and you just lost your job to a self-driving vehicle. Now there are new jobs in designing software or in teaching yoga to engineers — but how does a 50-year-old truck driver reinvent himself or herself as a software engineer or as a yoga teacher? And people will have to do it not just once but again and again throughout their lives, because the automation revolution will not be a single watershed event following which the job market will settle down into a new equilibrium. Rather, it will be a cascade of ever bigger disruptions, because artificial intelligence (AI) is nowhere near its full potential.

Old jobs will disappear, new jobs will emerge, but then the new jobs will rapidly change and vanish. Whereas in the past humans had to struggle against exploitation, in the 21st century, the really big struggle will be against irrelevance. And it is much worse to be irrelevant than exploited.

Those who fail in the struggle against irrelevance would constitute a new 'useless class' — people who are useless not from the viewpoint of their friends and family, but useless from the viewpoint of the economic and political system. And this useless class will be separated by an ever-growing gap from the ever more powerful elite.

THE AI REVOLUTION CREATING UNPRECEDENTED INEQUALITY BETWEEN CLASSES AND COUNTRIES

In the 19th century, a few countries like Britain and Japan industrialised first, and they went on to conquer and exploit most of the world. If we are not careful, the same thing will happen in the 21st century with AI.

We are already in the midst of an AI arms race, with China and the US leading the race, and most countries being left far, far behind. Unless we take action to distribute the benefit and power of AI between all humans, AI will likely create immense wealth in a few high-tech hubs, while other countries will either go bankrupt or become exploited data colonies.

Now we are not talking here about a science fiction scenario of robots rebelling against humans. We are talking about far more primitive AI, which is nevertheless enough to disrupt the global balance.

Just think what will happen to developing economies once it is cheaper to produce textiles or cars in California than in Mexico? And what will happen to politics in your country in 20 years, when somebody in San Francisco or Beijing knows the entire medical and personal history of every politician, every judge and every journalist in your country, including all their sexual escapades, all their mental weaknesses and all their corrupt dealings? Will it still be an independent country or will it become a data colony?

When you have enough data, you do not need to send soldiers in order to control a country.

THE RISE OF DIGITAL DICTATORSHIPS AND GLOBAL MONITORING

This danger can be stated in the form of a simple equation, which I think might be the defining equation of life in the 21st century:
$$B \times C \times D = AHH!$$

Which means? Biological knowledge multiplied by computing power multiplied by data equals the ability to hack humans, ahh!

If you know enough biology and have enough computing power and data, you can hack my body and my brain and my life, and you can understand me better than I understand myself. You can know my personality type, my political views, my sexual preferences, my mental weaknesses, my deepest fears and hopes. You know more about me than I know about myself. And you can do that not just to me, but to everyone.

A system that understands us better than we understand ourselves can predict our feelings and decisions, can manipulate our feelings and decisions and can ultimately make decisions for us.

Now in the past, many governments and tyrants wanted to do it, but nobody understood biology well enough, and nobody had enough computing power and data to hack millions of people. Neither the Gestapo nor the KGB could do it. But soon at least some corporations and governments will be able to systematically hack all the people. We humans should get used to the idea that we are no longer mysterious souls — we are now hackable animals. That is what we are.

The power to hack humans can be used for good purposes — like providing much better healthcare. But if this power falls into the hands of a 21st-century Stalin, the result will be the worst totalitarian regime in human history. And we already have a number of applicants for the job of 21st-century Stalin.

Just imagine North Korea in 20 years, when everybody has to wear a biometric bracelet that constantly monitors your blood pressure, your heart rate, your brain activity 24 hours a day. You listen to a speech on the radio by the great leader, and they know what you actually feel. You can clap your hands and smile, but if you are angry, they know, you will be in the gulag tomorrow. And if we allow the emergence of such total surveillance regimes, do not think that the rich and powerful in places like Davos will be safe, just ask Jeff Bezos. In Stalin's USSR, the state monitored members of the communist elite more than anyone else. The same will be true of future total surveillance regimes. The higher you are in the hierarchy — the more closely you will be watched. Do you want your chief executive officer or your president to know what you really think about them? So it is in the interest of all humans, including the elites, to prevent the rise of such digital dictatorships. And in the meantime, if you get a suspicious WhatsApp message, from some Prince, do not open it. Now if we indeed prevent the establishment of digital dictatorships, the ability to hack humans might still undermine the very meaning of human freedom. Because as humans will rely on AI to make more and more decisions for us, authority will shift from humans to algorithms and this is already happening. Already today billions of people trust the Facebook algorithm to tell us what is new, the Google algorithm tells us what is true, Netflix tells us what to watch, and the Amazon and Alibaba algorithms tell us what to buy. In the not-so-distant future, similar algorithms might tell us where to work and who to marry, and also decide whether to hire us for a job, whether to give us a loan, and whether the central bank should raise the interest rate. And if you ask why you were not given a loan, and why you the bank did not raise the interest rate, the answer will always be the same — because the computer says no. And as the limited human brain lacks sufficient biological knowledge, computing power and data — humans will simply not be able to understand the computer's decisions. So even in supposedly free countries, humans are likely to lose control over our own lives and also lose the ability to understand public policy.

Already now, how many humans understand the financial system? Maybe 1 per cent, to be very generous. In a couple of decades, the number of humans capable of understanding the financial system will be exactly zero. Now we humans are used to thinking about life as a drama of decision-making. What will be the meaning of human life when most decisions are taken by algorithms? We do not even have philosophical models to understand such an existence.

The usual bargain between philosophers and politicians is that philosophers have a lot of fanciful ideas, and politicians basically explain that they lack the means to implement these ideas. Now we are in an opposite situation. We are facing philosophical bankruptcy.

The twin revolutions of infotech and biotech are now giving politicians the means to create heaven or hell, but the philosophers are having trouble conceptualising what the new heaven and the new hell will look like. And that is a very dangerous situation.

If we fail to conceptualise the new heaven quickly enough, we might be easily misled by naïve utopias. And if we fail to conceptualise the new hell quickly enough, we might find ourselves entrapped there with no way out.

Technological disruption of not just our economy, politics and philosophy but also our biology

In the coming decades, AI and biotechnology will give us godlike abilities to reengineer life, and even to create completely new life forms. After four billion years of organic life shaped by natural selection, we are about to enter a new era of inorganic life shaped by intelligent design.

Our intelligent design is going to be the new driving force of the evolution of life and in using our new divine powers of creation, we might make mistakes on a cosmic scale. In particular, governments, corporations and armies are likely to use technology to enhance human skills that they need — like intelligence and discipline — while neglecting other human skills — like compassion, artistic sensitivity and spirituality.

The result might be a race of humans who are very intelligent and very disciplined but lack compassion, artistic sensitivity and spiritual depth. Of course, this is not a prophecy. These are just possibilities. Technology is never

deterministic.

In the 20th century, people used the same industrial technology to build very different kinds of societies: fascist dictatorships, communist regimes, liberal democracies. The same thing will happen in the 21st century.

AI and biotech will certainly transform the world, but we can use them to create very different kinds of societies. And if you are afraid of some of the possibilities I have mentioned, you can still do something about it. But to do something effective, we need global cooperation.

GLOBAL PROBLEMS THAT DEMAND GLOBAL SOLUTIONS

Whenever a leader says something like 'My country first!' we should remind that leader that no nation can prevent nuclear war or stop ecological collapse by itself, and no nation can regulate AI and bioengineering by itself.

Almost every country will say, 'Hey, we don't want to develop killer robots or to genetically engineer human babies. We are the good guys. But we can't trust our rivals not to do it. So we must do it first'.

If we allow such an arms race to develop in fields like AI and bioengineering, it does not really matter who wins the arms race — the loser will be humanity.

Unfortunately, just when global cooperation is more needed than ever before, some of the most powerful leaders and countries in the world are now deliberately undermining global cooperation. Leaders like the US presid

ent tell us that there is an inherent contradiction between nationalism and globalism, and that we should choose nationalism and reject globalism.

But this is a dangerous mistake. There is no contradiction between nationalism and globalism. Because nationalism is not about hating foreigners. Nationalism is about loving your compatriots. And in the 21st century, in order to protect the safety and the future of your compatriots, you must cooperate with foreigners.

So in the 21st century, good nationalists must be also globalists. Now globalism does not mean establishing a global government, abandoning all national traditions or opening the border to unlimited immigration. Rather, globalism means a **commitment to some global rules**.

Rules that do not deny the uniqueness of each nation, but only regulate the relations between nations.

THE WORLD CUP: AN EFFECTIVE MODEL FOR GLOBAL COOPERATION

The World Cup is a competition between nations, and people often show fierce loyalty to their national team. But at the same time, the World Cup is also an amazing display of global harmony. France cannot play football against Croatia unless the French and the Croatians agree on the same rules for the game. And that is globalism in action.

If you like the World Cup — you are already a globalist.

Now hopefully, nations could agree on global rules not just for football, but also **for how to prevent ecological collapse**, how to **regulate dangerous technologies** and how to **reduce** global **inequality**. How to make sure, for example, that AI benefits Mexican textile workers and not only American software engineers. Now of course, this is going to be much more difficult than football — but not impossible. Because the impossible, well **we have already accomplished the impossible**.

We have already **escaped the violent jungle** in which we humans have lived throughout history. For thousands of years, **humans lived under the law of the jungle** in a condition of **omnipresent war**. The law of the jungle said that for every two nearby countries, there is a plausible scenario that they will go to war against each other next year. Under this law, **peace** meant only 'the **temporary absence** of war'.

When there was 'peace' between — say — Athens and Sparta, or France and Germany, it meant that **now** they are not at war, but next year they **might** be. And for thousands of years, people had assumed that it was impossible to escape this law. But in the **last few decades**, humanity has **managed** to do the **impossible**, to **break the law and to escape the jungle**. We have built the rule-based **liberal global order** that, despite many **imperfections**, **has** nevertheless **created the most prosperous and most peaceful era in human history**.

Peace has changed

'Peace' no longer means just the **temporary absence** of war. Peace **now** means the **implausibility** of war.

There are many countries that you simply **cannot imagine going to war** against each other **next year** — like France and Germany. There are still wars in som

e parts of the world. I come from the Middle East, so believe me, I know this perfectly well. **But it should not blind us to the overall global picture.**

We are now living in a world in which **war kills fewer people than suicide**, and **gunpowder is far less dangerous** to your life **than sugar**. Most countries — with some notable exceptions like Russia — **do not even fantasise about conquering** and annexing their **neighbours**. Which is why most countries can afford to spend maybe just about 2 per cent of their gross domestic product on defence, while **spending** far, far more **on education and healthcare**. This is **not a jungle**.

Unfortunately, we have gotten so **used** to **this** wonderful **situation** that **we take it for granted**, and we are therefore becoming extremely **careless**. **Instead of doing everything we can to strengthen the fragile global order, countries neglect it and even deliberately undermine it.**

The global order is now like a house that **everybody inhabits and nobody repairs**. It can hold on for a few more years, but **if we continue** like this, **it will collapse** — and we will find ourselves **back in the jungle of omnipresent war**. We have forgotten what it is like, but believe me as a historian — **you do not want to be back there**. It is **far, far worse than you imagine**.

Yes, our species has evolved in that jungle and lived and even prospered there for thousands of years, but if we return there now, with the powerful new technologies of the 21st century, **our species will** probably **annihilate itself**.

Framework—1AC

The standard is consistency with hedonistic act utilitarianism.

***6. Extinction outweighs - billions of deaths**

Burns 17 (Elizabeth Finneron-Burns is a Teaching Fellow at the University of Warwick and an Affiliated Researcher at the Institute for Futures Studies in Stockholm, What's wrong with human extinction?, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/00455091.2016.1278150?needAccess=true>, Canadian Journal of Philosophy, 16 January 2017)

Many, though certainly not all, people might believe that it would be wrong to bring about the end of the human species, and the reasons given for this belief are various. I begin by considering four reasons that could be given against the moral permissibility of human extinction. I will argue that only those reasons that impact the people who exist at the time that the extinction or the knowledge of the upcoming extinction occurs, can explain its wrongness. I use this conclusion to then consider in which cases human extinction would be morally permissible or impermissible, arguing that there is only a small class of cases in which it would not be wrong to cause the extinction of the human race or allow it to happen. 2.1. It would prevent the existence of very many happy people. One reason of human extinction might be considered to be wrong lies in the value of human life itself. The thought here might be that it is a good thing for people to exist and enjoy happy lives and extinction would deprive more people of enjoying this good. The 'good' in this case could be understood in at least two ways. According to the first, one might believe that you benefit a person by bringing them into existence, or at least, that it is good for that person that they come to exist. The second view might hold that if humans were to go extinct, the utility foregone by the billions (or more) of people who could have lived but will now never get that opportunity, renders allowing human extinction to take place an incidence of wrongdoing. An example of this view can be found in two quotes from an Effective Altruism blog post by Peter Singer, Nick Beckstead and Matt Wage: One very bad thing about human extinction would be that billions of people would likely die painful deaths

. But in our view, this is by far not the worst thing about human extinction. The worst thing about human extinction is that there would be no future generations. Since there could be so many generations in our future, the value of all those generations together greatly exceeds the value of the current generation. (Beckstead, Singer, and Wage 2013) The authors are making two claims. The first is that there is value in human life and also something valuable about creating future people which gives us a reason to do so; furthermore, it would be a very bad thing if we did not do so. The second is that, not only would it be a bad thing for there to be no future people, but it would actually be the worst thing about extinction. Since happy human lives have value, and the number of potential people who could ever exist is far greater than the number of people who exist at any one time, even if the extinction were brought about through the painful deaths of currently existing people, the former's loss would be greater than the latter's. Both claims are assuming that there is an intrinsic value in the existence of potential human life. The second claim makes the further assumption that the forgone value of the potential lives that could be lived is greater than the disvalue that would be accrued by people existing at the time of the extinction through suffering from painful and/or premature deaths. The best-known author of the post, Peter Singer is a prominent utilitarian, so it is not surprising that he would lament the potential lack of future human lives per se. However, it is not just utilitarians who share this view, even if implicitly. Indeed, other philosophers also seem to imply that they share the intuition that there is just something wrong with causing or failing to prevent the extinction of the human species such that we prevent more 'people' from having the 'opportunity to exist'. Stephen Gardiner (2009) and Martin O'Neill (personal correspondence), both sympathetic to contract theory, for example, also find it intuitive that we should want more generations to have the opportunity to exist, assuming that they have worth-living lives, and I find it plausible to think that many other people (philosophers and non-philosophers alike) probably share this intuition. When we talk about future lives being 'prevented', we are saying that a possible person or a set of possible people who could potentially have existed will now never actually come to exist. To say that it is wrong to prevent people from existing could either mean that a possible person could reasonably reject a principle that permitted us not to create them, or that the foregone value of their lives provides a reason for rejecting any principle that permits extinction. To make the first claim we would have to argue that a possible person could reasonably reject any principle that prevented their existence on the grounds that it prevented them in particular from existing. However, this is implausible for two reasons. First, we can only wrong someone who did, does or will actually exist because wronging involves failing to take a person's interests into account. When considering the permissibility of a principle allowing us not to create Person X, we cannot take X's interest in being created into account because X will not exist if we follow the principle. By considering the standpoint of a person in our deliberations we consider the burdens they will have to bear as a result of the principle. In this case, there is no one who will bear any burdens since if the principle is followed (that is, if we do not create X), X will not exist to bear any burdens. So, only people who do/will actually exist can bear the brunt of a principle, and therefore occupy a standpoint that is owed justification. Second, existence is not an interest at all and a possible person is not disadvantaged by not being caused to exist. Rather than being an interest, it is a necessary requirement in order to have interests. Rivka Weinberg describes it as 'neutral' because causing a person to exist is to create a subject who can have interests; existence is not an interest itself.³ In order to be disadvantaged, there must be some detrimental effect on your interests. However, without existence, a person does not have any interests so they cannot be disadvantaged by being kept out of existence. But, as Weinberg points out, 'never having interests itself could not be contrary to people's interests since without interest bearers, there can be no 'they' for it to be bad for' (Weinberg 2008, 13). So, a principle that results in some possible people never becoming actual does not impose any costs on those 'people' because nobody is disadvantaged by not coming into existence.⁴ It therefore seems that it cannot be wrong to fail to bring particular people into existence. This would mean that no one acts wrongly when they fail to create another person. Writ large, it would also not be wrong if everybody decided to exercise their prerogative not to create new people and potentially, by consequence, allow human extinction. One might respond here by saying that although it may be permissible for one person to fail to create a new person, it is not permissible if everyone chooses to do so because human lives have value and allowing human extinction would be to forgo a huge amount of value in the world. This takes us to the second way of understanding the potential wrongness of preventing people from existing — the foregone value of a life provides a reason for rejecting any principle that prevents it. One possible reply to this claim turns on the fact that many philosophers acknowledge that the only, or at least the best, way to think about

the value of (individual or groups of) possible people's lives is in impersonal terms (Parfit 1984; Reiman 2007; McMahan 2009). Jeff McMahan, for example, writes 'at the time of one's choice there is no one who exists or will exist independently of that choice for whose sake one could be acting in causing him or her to exist ... it seems therefore that any reason to cause or not to cause an individual to exist ... is best considered an impersonal rather than individual-affecting reason' (McMahan 2009, 52). Another reply along similar lines would be to appeal to the value that is lost or at least foregone when we fail to bring into existence a next (or several next) generations of people with worth-living lives. Since ex hypothesi worth-living lives have positive value, it is better to create more such lives and worse to create fewer. Human extinction by definition is the creation of no future lives and would 'deprive' billions of 'people' of the opportunity to live worth-living lives. This might reduce the amount of value in the world at the time of the extinction (by killing already existing people), but it would also prevent a much vaster amount of value in the future (by failing to create more people). Both replies depend on the impersonal value of human life. However, recall that in contractualism impersonal values are not on their own grounds for reasonably rejecting principles. Scanlon himself says that although we have a strong reason not to destroy existing human lives, this reason 'does not flow from the thought that it is a good thing for there to be more human life rather than less' (104). In contractualism, something cannot be wrong unless there is an impact on a person. Thus, neither the impersonal value of creating a particular person nor the impersonal value of human life writ large could on its own provide a reason for rejecting a principle permitting human extinction. It seems therefore that the fact that extinction would deprive future people of the opportunity to live worth-living lives (either by failing to create either particular future people or future people in general) cannot provide us with a reason to consider human extinction to be wrong. Although the lost value of these 'lives' itself cannot be the reason explaining the wrongness of extinction, it is possible the knowledge of this loss might create a personal reason for some existing people. I will consider this possibility later on in section (d). But first I move to the

second reason human extinction might be wrong per se. 2.2. **It would mean the loss of the only known form of intelligent life and all civilization and intellectual progress would be lost** A second reason we might think it would be wrong to cause human extinction is the loss that would occur of the only (known) form of

rational life and the knowledge and civilization that that form of life has created. One thought here could be that just as some might consider it wrong to destroy an individual human heritage monument like the Sphinx, it would also be wrong if the advances made by humans over the past few millennia

were lost or prevented from progressing. A related argument is made by those who feel that there is something special about **humans'**

capacity for rationality which **is valuable in itself**. Since humans are the only intelligent life that we know of, it would be a loss, in itself, to the world for that to end. I admit that I struggle to fully appreciate this thought. It seems to me that Henry Sidgwick was correct in thinking that these things are only important insofar as they are important to humans (Sidgwick 1874, I.IX.4).⁵ If there is no form of intelligent life in the future, who would there be to lament its loss since intelligent life is the only form of life capable of appreciating intelligence? Similarly, if there is no one with the rational capacity to appreciate historic monuments and civil progress, who would there be to be negatively affected or even notice the loss?⁶ However, even if there is nothing special about human rationality, just as some people try to prevent the extinction of nonhuman animal species, we

might think that **we ought also to prevent human extinction for the sake of biodiversity**. The thought in this, as well as the earlier examples, must be that it would somehow be bad for the world if there were no more humans even though there would be no one for whom it is bad. This may be so but the only way to understand this reason is impersonally. Since we are concerned with wrongness rather than badness, we must ask whether something that impacts no one's well-being, status or claims can be wrong. As we saw earlier, in the contractualist framework reasons must be personal rather than impersonal in order to provide grounds for reasonable rejection (Scanlon 1998, 218–223). Since the loss of civilization, intelligent life or biodiversity are per se impersonal reasons, there is no standpoint from which these reasons could be used to reasonably reject a principle that permitted extinction. Therefore, causing human extinction on the grounds of the loss of civilization, rational life or

biodiversity would not be wrong. 2.3. **Existing people would endure physical pain and/or**

painful and/or premature deaths Thinking about the ways in which human extinction might come about brings to the fore two more reasons it might be wrong. It could, for example, occur if all humans (or at least the critical number needed to be unable to replenish the population, leading to eventual extinction) underwent a sterilization procedure. Or perhaps it could come about due to anthropogenic climate change or a

massive asteroid hitting the Earth and wiping out the species in the same way it did the dinosaurs millions of years ago. **Each** of these

scenarios would involve significant physical and/or non-physical harms to existing people and their interests. Physically, people might suffer premature and possibly also painful deaths, for example. It is not hard to imagine examples in which the process

of **extinction could cause premature death. A nuclear winter that killed everyone or**

even just every woman under the age of 50 is a clear example of such a case. Obviously, some types of premature death themselves cannot be reasons to reject a principle. Every person dies eventually, sometimes earlier than the standard expected lifespan due to accidents or causes like spontaneously occurring incurable cancers. A cause such as disease is not a moral agent and therefore it cannot be wrong if it unavoidably kills a person prematurely. Scanlon says that the fact that a principle would reduce a person's well-being gives that person a reason to reject the principle: 'components of well-being figure prominently as grounds for reasonable rejection' (Scanlon 1998, 214). However, it is not settled yet whether premature death is a setback to well-being. Some philosophers hold that death is a harm to the person who dies, whilst others

argue that it is not.⁷ I will argue, however, that regardless of who is correct in that debate, **being caused to die prematurely**

can be reason to reject a principle when it fails to show respect to the person as a

rational agent. Scanlon says that recognizing others as rational beings with interests involves seeing reason to preserve life and prevent

death: **'appreciating the value of human life is primarily a matter of seeing human lives**

as something to be respected, where this involves seeing reasons not to destroy them, reasons to protect them, and reasons to want them to go well' (Scanlon 1998, 104). The 'respect for life' in this case is a respect for the person living, not respect for human life in the abstract. This means that we can sometimes fail to protect human life without acting wrongfully if we still respect the person living. Scanlon gives the example of a person who faces a life of unending and extreme pain such that she wishes to end it by committing suicide. Scanlon does not think that the suicidal person shows a lack of respect for her own life by seeking to end it because the person whose life it is has no reason to want it to go on. This is important to note because it emphasizes the fact that the respect for human life is person-affecting. It is not wrong to murder because of the impersonal disvalue of death in general, but because **taking someone's life without their permission shows disrespect to that**

person. This supports its inclusion as a reason in the contractualist formula, regardless of what side ends up winning the 'is death a harm?' debate

because even if death turns out not to harm the person who died, ending their life without their consent shows disrespect to that person. A person who could reject a principle permitting another to cause his or her premature death presumably does not wish to die at that time, or in that manner. Thus, **if**

they are killed without their consent, their interests have not been taken

into account, and they have a reason to reject the principle that allowed their premature death.⁸ This is as true in the case of death due to

extinction as it is for death due to murder. However, physical pain may also be caused to existing people without killing them, but still resulting in human extinction. Imagine, for example, surgically removing everyone's reproductive organs in order to prevent the creation of any future people. Another

example could be **a nuclear bomb that did not kill anyone, but did painfully render them**

infertile through illness or injury. These would be cases in which physical pain (through surgery or bombs) was inflicted on existing people and the extinction came about as a result of the painful incident rather than through death. Furthermore, one could imagine a situation in which a bomb (for example) killed enough people to cause extinction, but some people remained alive, but in terrible pain from injuries. It seems uncontroversial that the infliction of physical pain could be a reason to reject a principle. Although Scanlon says that an impact on well-being is not the

only reason to reject principles, it plays a significant role, and indeed, most principles are likely to be rejected due to a negative impact on a person's well-being, physical or otherwise. It may be queried here whether it is actually the involuntariness of the pain that is grounds for reasonable rejection rather than the physical pain itself because not all pain that a person suffers is involuntary. One can imagine acts that can cause physical pain that are not rejectable — base jumping or life-saving or improving surgery, for example. On the other hand, pushing someone off a cliff or cutting him with a scalpel against his will are clearly rejectable acts. The difference between the two cases is that in the former, the person having the pain inflicted has consented to that pain or risk of pain. My view is that they cannot be separated in these cases and it is involuntary physical pain that is the grounds for reasonable rejection. Thus, the fact that a principle would allow unwanted physical harm gives a person who would be subjected to that harm a reason to reject the principle. Of course the mere fact that a principle causes involuntary physical harm or premature death is not sufficient to declare that the principle is rejectable — there might be countervailing reasons. In the case of extinction, what countervailing reasons might be offered in favour of the involuntary physical pain/ death-inducing harm? One such reason that might be offered is that humans are a harm to the natural environment and that the world might be a better place if there were no humans in it. It could be that humans might rightfully be considered an all-things-considered hindrance to the world rather than a benefit to it given the fact that we have been largely responsible for the extinction of many species, pollution and, most recently, climate change which have all negatively affected the natural environment in ways we are only just beginning to understand. Thus, the fact that human extinction would improve the natural environment (or at least prevent it from degrading further), is a countervailing reason in favour of extinction to be weighed against the reasons held by humans who would experience physical pain or premature death. However, the good of the environment as described above is by definition not a personal reason. Just like the loss of rational life and civilization, therefore, it cannot be a reason on its own when determining what is wrong and countervail the strong personal reasons to avoid pain/death that is held by the people who would suffer from it. Every person existing at the time of the extinction would have a reason to reject that principle on the grounds of the physical pain they are being forced to endure against their will that could not be countervailed by impersonal considerations such as the negative impact humans may have on the earth. Therefore, a principle that permitted extinction to be accomplished in a way that caused involuntary physical pain or premature death could quite clearly be rejectable by existing people with no relevant countervailing reasons. This means that human extinction that came about in this way would be wrong.

There are of course also additional reasons they could reject a similar principle which I now turn to address in the next section. 2.4. **Existing people could endure non-physical harms** I said earlier than the fact in itself that there would not be any future people is an impersonal reason and can therefore not be a reason to reject a principle permitting extinction.

However, this impersonal reason could give rise to a personal reason that is admissible. So, the final important reason people might think that human extinction would be wrong is that there could be various deleterious psychological effects that would be endured by existing people having the knowledge that there would be no future generations. There are two main sources of this trauma, both arising from the knowledge that there will be no more people. The first relates to individual people and the undesired negative effect on well-being that would be experienced by those who would have wanted to have children. Whilst **this is by no means universal**, **it is fair to say that a good proportion of people feel a strong pull towards reproduction** and having their lineage continue in some way. Samuel Scheffler describes the pull towards reproduction as a 'desire for a personalized relationship with the future' (Scheffler 2012, 31). Reproducing is a widely held desire and the joys of parenthood are ones that many people wish to experience. For these people knowing that they would not have descendants (or that their descendants will endure painful and/or premature deaths) could create a sense of despair and pointlessness of life. Furthermore, the inability to reproduce and have your own children because of a principle/policy that prevents you (either through bans or physical interventions) would be a significant infringement of what we consider to be a basic right to control what happens to your body. For these reasons, knowing that you will have no descendants could cause significant psychological traumas or harms even if there were no associated physical harm. The second is a more general, higher level sense of hopelessness or despair that there will be no more humans and that your projects will end with you. Even those who did not feel a strong desire to procreate themselves might feel a sense of hopelessness that any projects or goals they have for the future would not be fulfilled. Many of the projects and goals we work towards during our lifetime are also at least partly future-oriented. Why bother continuing the search for a cure for cancer if either it will not be found within humans' lifetime, and/or there will be no future people to benefit from it once it is found? Similar projects and goals that might lose their meaning when confronted with extinction include politics, artistic pursuits and even the type of philosophical work with which this paper is concerned. Even more extreme, through the words of the character Theo Faron, P.D. James says in his novel *The Children of Men* that 'without the hope of posterity for our race if not for ourselves, without the assurance that we being dead yet live, all pleasures of the mind and senses sometimes seem to me no more than pathetic and crumbling defences shored up against our ruins' (James 2006, 9). Even if James' claim is a bit hyperbolic and all pleasures would not actually be lost, I agree with Scheffler in finding it not implausible that the knowledge that extinction was coming and that there would be no more people would have at least a general depressive effect on people's motivation and confidence in the value of and joy in their activities (Scheffler 2012, 43). **Both sources of psychological harm are personal reasons to reject a principle that permitted human extinction**. Existing people could therefore reasonably reject the principle for either of these reasons. Psychological pain and the inability to pursue your personal projects, goals, and aims, are all acceptable reasons for rejecting principles in the contractualist framework. So too are infringements of rights and entitlements that we accept as important for people's lives. These psychological reasons, then, are also valid reasons to reject principles that permitted or required human extinction.

7. Existential threats are truly universal---it's a side constraint.

Zimmer 22 [Daniel Zimmer, postdoctoral scholar at the Stanford Existential Risk Initiative. I received my PhD in political thought from the Government Department of Cornell University in 2022. "THE IMMANENT APOCALYPSE: HUMANITY AND THE ENDS OF THE WORLD." <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2712811466?pq-origsite=gscholar&fromopenview=true>]

There is **nothing necessary** about the prospect of universal death by **hydrogen bomb**, just as the prospect of annihilating all complex life in nuclear fire or a tide of synthetic **viruses** robbed the whole order of terrestrial Nature of any lingering claim it might have had to being 'necessary.' What remains is a near **infinitude** of contingent processes that collectively make up the continuous flux of a finite Earth. **Within this welter**, it has become possible for human **beings** to **initiate** new processes that **universally impinge** on the **survival of all human beings**, and even **all complex life**. While **it remains** urgently **necessary to treat** all contingently universal claims with careful **scrutiny**, the introduction of the power to **kill life itself** into human affairs **means** that the critical **thinkers** of today **should not be too hasty in concluding** that "whoever invokes **humanity wants to cheat**"¹⁹⁷ or that "despite their **claims to universality**... 'end of the world' discourses **are** more specifically **concerned about** protecting the **future of whiteness**."¹⁹⁸

Footnote 198 Begins

198 **Audra Mitchell and Aadita Chaudhury**, "Worlding Beyond 'The' 'End' of 'The World': White Apocalyptic Visions and BIPOC Futurisms" in *International Relations* (2020), pp. 309-332; 310.

Footnote 198 Ends

When **the biological threshold of modernity was crossed** and the politically modern world born with the first thermonuclear explosions, **the death of the sum total of all living human beings** became a source of contingent **universalizability** that every subsequent generation must continually **keep at bay**.

There are indeed many who can justly be accused of taking an interest in the immanent **apocalypse** less out of concern for all human beings or solidarity with all earthly life, but instead **out of a desire to preserve their privileged place** in the existing order or because "it is easier to imagine the end of the world than to imagine the end of capitalism."¹⁹⁹ (Here the millions of dollars in billionaire philanthropy that is pouring into existential risk research centers such as Oxford's Future of Humanity Institute affords ample food for thought.)²⁰⁰ **This being said**, on a planet where death itself has become **contingently universal**, nothing would be less **critical** than to **reflexively assume** that all appeals to human universality are necessarily a **ruse of power**. The reality of collective life on Earth has become a political concern contingently, but **no less urgently**. It is seventy years since this realization broke on Arendt and almost a half century since it dawned for Foucault. Contemporary political and critical **theorists must** begin to **directly address** the **new forms of non-humanist universality that have arisen alongside** the immanentization of the **apocalypse or risk** missing increasingly planetary contexts within which all specific political **struggles** are now being waged.

1. Science proves non util ethics are impossible and our version of util solves all aff offense

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(The Secret Joke of Kant's Soul published in Moral Psychology: Historical and Contemporary Readings, accessed:

www.fed.cuhk.edu.hk/~lchang/material/Evolutionary/Developmental/Greene-KantSoul.pdf)

What **turn-of-the-millennium science is telling us** is that **human moral judgment is not a pristine rational enterprise**, that our **moral judgments are driven by a hodgepodge of emotional dispositions, which themselves were shaped by a hodgepodge of evolutionary forces, both biological and cultural**. Because of this, it is **exceedingly unlikely that there is any rationally coherent normative moral theory that can accommodate our moral intuitions**. Moreover, **anyone who claims to have such a theory**, or even part of one, **almost certainly doesn't**. Instead, what that person probably has is a moral rationalization. It seems then, that we have somehow crossed the infamous "is"-"ought" divide. How did this happen? Didn't Hume (Hume, 1978) and Moore (Moore, 1966) warn us against trying to derive an "ought" from an "is?" How did we go from descriptive scientific theories concerning moral psychology to skepticism about a whole class of normative moral theories? The answer is that we did not, as Hume and Moore anticipated, attempt to derive an "ought" from an "is." That is, our method has been inductive rather than deductive. We have inferred on the basis of the available evidence that the phenomenon of rationalist deontological philosophy is best explained as a rationalization of evolved emotional intuition (Harman, 1977). Missing the Deontological Point I suspect that **rationalist deontologists will remain unmoved by the arguments presented here**. Instead, I suspect, **they will insist that I have simply misunderstood what Kant and like-minded deontologists are all about**. Deontology, they will say, isn't about this intuition or that intuition. It's not defined by its normative differences with consequentialism. **Rather, deontology is about taking humanity seriously**. Above all else, it's about respect for persons. It's about treating others as fellow rational creatures rather than as mere objects, about acting for reasons rational beings can share. And so on (Korsgaard, 1996a; Korsgaard, 1996b). **This is, no doubt, how many deontologists see deontology. But this insider's view**, as I've suggested, **may be misleading**. The problem, more specifically, **is that it defines deontology in terms of values that are not distinctively deontological**, though they may appear to be from the inside. **Consider the following analogy with religion. When one asks a religious person to explain the essence of his religion, one often gets an answer like this: "It's about love**, really. It's about looking out for other people, looking beyond oneself. It's about community, being part of something larger than oneself." **This sort of answer accurately captures the phenomenology of many people's religion, but it's nevertheless inadequate for distinguishing religion from other things**. This is because many, if not most, non-religious people aspire to love deeply, look out for other people, avoid self-absorption, have a sense of a community, and be connected to things larger than themselves. In other words, secular humanists and atheists can assent to most of what many religious people think religion is all about. From a secular humanist's point of view, in contrast, what's distinctive about religion is its commitment to the existence of supernatural entities as well as

formal religious institutions and doctrines. And they're right. These things really do distinguish religious from non-religious practices, though they may appear to be secondary to many people operating from within a religious point of view. In the same way, I believe that most of **the standard deontological/Kantian self-characterizations fail to distinguish deontology from other approaches to ethics**. (See also Kagan (Kagan, 1997, pp. 70-78.) on the difficulty of defining deontology.) It seems to me that **consequentialists**, as much as anyone else, **have respect for persons, are against treating people as mere objects, wish to act for reasons that rational creatures can share**, etc. **A consequentialist respects other persons, and refrains from treating them as mere objects, by counting every person's well-being in the decision-making process**. Likewise, a consequentialist attempts to act **according to reasons that rational creatures can share by acting according to principles that give equal weight to everyone's interests, i.e. that are impartial**. This is not to say that consequentialists and deontologists don't differ. They do. It's just that the real differences may not be what deontologists often take them to be. What, then, distinguishes deontology from other kinds of moral thought? A good strategy for answering this question is to start with concrete disagreements between deontologists and others (such as consequentialists) and then work backward in search of deeper principles. This is what I've attempted to do with the trolley and footbridge cases, and other instances in which deontologists and consequentialists disagree. **If you ask a deontologically-minded person why it's wrong to push someone in front of speeding trolley in order to save five others, you will get** characteristically deontological **answers**. Some **will be tautological**: **"Because it's murder!"** Others will be **more sophisticated**: **"The ends don't justify the means."** "You have to respect people's rights." **But**, as we know, **these answers don't really explain anything**, because **if you give the same people** (on different occasions) **the trolley case** or the loop case (See above), **they'll make the opposite judgment**, even though their initial explanation concerning the footbridge case applies equally well to one or both of these cases. **Talk about rights, respect for persons, and reasons we can share are natural attempts to explain, in "cognitive" terms, what we feel when we find ourselves having emotionally driven intuitions that are odds with the cold calculus of consequentialism**. Although these explanations are inevitably incomplete, **there seems to be "something deeply right" about them because they give voice to powerful moral emotions**. **But, as with many religious people's accounts of what's essential to religion, they don't really explain what's distinctive about the philosophy in question**.

2. Uncertainty and social contract require governments use util

Gooden, 1995 (Robert, philosopher at the Research School of the Social Sciences, Utilitarianism as Public Philosophy. P. 62-63)

Consider, first, the argument from necessity. **Public officials** are obliged to **make their choices under uncertainty**, and uncertainty of a very special sort at that. **All choices—public and private alike—are made under some degree of uncertainty**, of course. **But in the nature of things, private individuals** will usually **have more complete information** on the peculiarities of their own circumstances and on the ramifications that alternative possible choices might have on them. **Public officials**, in contrast, are relatively poorly informed as to the effects that their choices will have on individuals, one by one. What they **typically**

do know are generalities: averages and aggregates. They know what will happen most often to most people as a result of their various possible choices. But that is all. That is enough to allow public policy-makers to use the utilitarian calculus—if they want to use it at all—to choose general rules of conduct. Knowing aggregates and averages, they can proceed to calculate the utility payoffs from adopting each alternative possible general rules.

3. Extinction o/ws under any framework- moral uncertainty and future gens

Pummer, PhD, 15

(Theron, Philosophy @St. Andrews <http://blog.practicaethics.ox.ac.uk/2015/05/moral-agreement-on-saving-the-world/>)

There appears to be lot of disagreement in moral philosophy. Whether these many apparent disagreements are deep and irresolvable, I believe **there is** at least **one thing it is reasonable to agree on** right now, whatever general moral view we adopt: that **it is** very **important to reduce the risk that** all intelligent **beings** on this planet **are eliminated by** an enormous catastrophe, such as a nuclear war. How we might in fact try to reduce such existential risks is discussed elsewhere. My claim here is only that **we** - **whether we're consequentialists, deontologists, or virtue ethicists** - **should all agree that we should try to save the world.** According to consequentialism, we should maximize the good, where this is taken to be the goodness, from an impartial perspective, of outcomes. Clearly one thing that makes an outcome good is that the people in it are doing well. There is little disagreement here. If the happiness or well-being of possible future people is just as important as that of people who already exist, and if they would have good lives, it is not hard to see how reducing existential risk is easily the most important thing in the whole world. This is for the familiar reason that there are so many people who could exist in the future - there are trillions upon trillions... upon trillions. **There are so many possible future people that reducing existential risk is arguably the most important thing in the world**, even if the well-being of these possible people were given only 0.001% as much weight as that of existing people. **Even on a wholly person-affecting view** - according to which there's nothing (apart from effects on existing people) to be said in favor of creating happy people - **the case for reducing existential risk is very strong**. As noted in this seminal paper, this case is strengthened by the fact that there's a good chance that many existing people will, with the aid of life-extension technology, live very long and very high quality lives. **You might think what I have just argued applies to consequentialists only. There is a tendency to assume that, if an argument appeals to consequentialist considerations** (the goodness of outcomes), **it is irrelevant to non-consequentialists. But that is a huge mistake. Non-consequentialism is the view that there's more that determines rightness than** the goodness of **consequences or** outcomes; **it is not the view that the latter don't matter**. Even John **Rawls wrote, "All ethical doctrines worth our attention take consequences into account** in judging rightness. **One which did not would simply be irrational, crazy."** **Minimally plausible versions of deontology and virtue ethics must be concerned in part with promoting the good, from an impartial point of view. They'd thus imply very strong reasons to reduce existential risk**, at least when this doesn't significantly involve doing harm to others or damaging one's character. What's even more surprising, perhaps, is that even if our own good (or that of those near and dear to us) has much greater weight than goodness from the impartial "point of view of the universe," indeed even if the latter is entirely morally irrelevant, we may nonetheless have very strong reasons to reduce existential risk. **Even egoism**, the view that each agent should maximize her own good, **might imply**

strong reasons to reduce existential risk. It will depend, among other things, on what one's own good consists in. If well-being consisted in pleasure only, it is somewhat harder to argue that egoism would imply strong reasons to reduce existential risk – perhaps we could argue that one would maximize her expected hedonic well-being by funding life extension technology or by having herself cryogenically frozen at the time of her bodily death as well as giving money to reduce existential risk (so that there is a world for her to live in!). I am not sure, however, how strong the reasons to do this would be. But views which imply that, if I don't care about other people, I have no or very little reason to help them are not even minimally plausible views (in addition to hedonistic egoism, I here have in mind views that imply that one has no reason to perform an act unless one actually desires to do that act). To be minimally plausible, egoism will need to be paired with a more sophisticated account of well-being. To see this, it is enough to consider, as Plato did, the possibility of a ring of invisibility – suppose that, while wearing it, Ayn could derive some pleasure by helping the poor, but instead could derive just a bit more by severely harming them. Hedonistic egoism would absurdly imply she should do the latter. To avoid this implication, egoists would need to build something like the meaningfulness of a life into well-being, in some robust way, where this would to a significant extent be a function of other-regarding concerns (see chapter 12 of this classic intro to ethics). But once these elements are included, we can (roughly, as above) argue that this sort of egoism will imply strong reasons to reduce existential risk. Add to all of this Samuel Scheffler's recent intriguing arguments (quick podcast version available here) that **most of what makes our lives go well would be**

undermined if there were no future generations of intelligent persons. On his view, my life would contain vastly less well-being if (say) a year after my death the world came to an end. **So**

obviously if Scheffler were right **I'd have very strong reason to reduce existential risk.** **We should also take into account moral uncertainty.** **what is it**

reasonable for one to do, when one is uncertain not (only) **about** the empirical facts, but also about the **moral facts?** I've just argued that there's agreement among minimally plausible ethical views that we have strong reason to reduce existential risk – not only consequentialists, but also deontologists, virtue ethicists, and sophisticated egoists should agree. But even **those** (hedonistic egoists) **who**

disagree should have a significant level of confidence that they are mistaken, and that one of the above views is correct. **Even if they were 90% sure that**

their view is the correct one (and 10% sure that one of these other ones is correct), **they** **would have pretty strong reason, from the standpoint of moral**

uncertainty, to reduce existential risk. Perhaps most disturbingly still, **even if we are only 1% sure that the well-being of possible future people matters**, it is at least

arguable that, from the standpoint of moral uncertainty, **reducing existential risk is the most important thing in the world.** Again, this is largely **for the reason that there are so**

many people who could exist in the future – there are trillions upon trillions... upon trillions.

(For more on this and other related issues, see this excellent dissertation). **Of course, it is uncertain whether these untold trillions would, in general, have good lives.** It's possible

they'll be miserable. **It is enough** for my claim **that there is moral agreement in the relevant sense if, at least given certain empirical claims about what future lives would most likely be like, all minimally plausible moral views would converge on the conclusion that we should try to save the world.** While there are

some non-crazy views that place significantly greater moral weight on avoiding suffering than on promoting happiness, for reasons others have offered (and for independent reasons I won't get into here unless requested to), they nonetheless seem to be fairly implausible views. And **even if things did not go well for our ancestors, I am optimistic that they will overall go fantastically well for our descendants, if we allow them to.** I suspect that **most of us alive today** – at

least those of us not suffering from extreme illness or poverty – **have lives that are well worth living, and that things will continue to improve.** Derek Parfit, whose work has emphasized future generations as well as agreement in ethics, described our situation clearly and accurately: "We live during the hinge of history. Given the scientific and technological discoveries of the last two centuries, the world has never changed as fast. We shall soon have even greater powers to transform, not only our surroundings, but ourselves and our successors. If we act wisely in the next few centuries, humanity will survive its most dangerous and

decisive period. Our descendants could, if necessary, go elsewhere, spreading through this galaxy.... Our descendants might, I believe, make the further future very good. But that good future may also depend in part on us. If our selfish recklessness ends human history, we would be acting very wrongly." (From chapter 36 of On What Matters)

4. Disregarding foreseeable harm reifies structures of domination

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(Martha, "How the "Unintended Consequences" Story Promotes Unjust Intent and Impact," Berkeley La Raza, doi: dx.doi.org/doi:10.15779/Z381664)

By similarly making structures of inequality appear beyond the reach of law reform, the "unintended consequences" message helps update and reinforce the narrowing of protections against intentional racial harm. Justice is centrally a question of whose interests and whose harms should count, in what context and in what form and to whom. Power is centrally about being able to act without having to take harm to others into account. This power to gain by harming others is strongest when it operates through systems and structures that make disregarding that harm appear routine, rational, and beneficial or at least acceptable or perhaps inevitable. By portraying law's unequal harms as the "side effects" of systems and structures with unquestionable "main effects," **the "unintended consequences" story helps affirm the resulting harm** even as it seems to offer sympathy and technical assistance. In considering solutions to the financial market problems, the policy puzzle is not that struggling homeowners' interests are overwhelmingly complex or uncertain. Instead, the bigger problem is that overwhelmingly powerful interests and ideologies are actively resisting systemic changes that would make those interests count. The failure to criminally prosecute or otherwise severely penalize high-level financial industry fraud is not primarily the result of uncertainty about the harmful effects of that fraudulent behavior, but because the political and justice systems are skewed to protect the gains and unaccountability of wealthy executives despite the clear harms to hosts of others. **The unequal effects of the prevailing policy response to the crisis are foreseeable and obvious, not accidental or surprising.** It would not take advanced knowledge of economics to readily predict that modest-income homeowners would tend to be far worse off than bank executives by a policy approach that failed to provide substantial mortgage forgiveness and foreclosure protections for modest-income homeowners but instead provided massive subsidized credit and other protections for Wall Street. Many policy actions likely to alleviate the unequal harm of the crisis similarly are impeded not because consumer advocates, low-income homeowners, or racial justice advocates hesitate to risk major changes in existing systems, or are divided about the technical design of alternative programs or more effective mechanisms for enforcing laws against fraud and racial discrimination. Instead, the problem is that these voices pressing for effective change are often excluded, drowned out or distorted in Congress and in federal agencies such as the Treasury Department and the Federal Reserve, or in the media, in the mainstream economics profession, and to a large extent in legal scholarship about financial markets. More generally, those diverse voices from the bottom have been largely absent or marginalized in the dominant theoretical framework that constructs widespread and severe inequality as unforeseeable and largely inevitable, or even beneficial. Moreover, **justice requires careful attention to both harmful intent and to complex harmful effects.** But **the concept of "unintended consequences" inverts justice by suggesting that the best way to care for those at the bottom is to not care to make law more attentive to the bottom. "Unintended consequences" arguments promote a simplistic moral message in the guise of sophisticated intellectual critique**-the message that those who lack power should not seek it because the desire for more power is what hurts most. Further, **like Ayn Rand's overt philosophy of selfishness, that message promotes the theme that those who have power to ignore their harmful effects on others need not-indeed should not-be induced by law to care**

about this harm, because this caring is what is harmful. One right-wing think tank has recently made this moral message more explicit with an economic values campaign suggesting that the intentional pursuit of economic equality is a problem of the immoral envy of those whose economic success proves they are more deserving.¹⁶⁹ **Legal scholars and advocates who intend to put intellectual rigor and justice ahead of service to financial elites should reject stories of "unintended consequences" and instead scrutinize the power and laws that have so effectively achieved the intention of making devastating losses to so many of us seem natural, inevitable, and beneficial.**

5. Predictions are possible and useful

Mearsheimer, 01 (John, professor of political science at the University of Chicago, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 2001 p. 8, googleprint)

As a result, all political forecasting is bound to include some error. Those who venture to predict, as I do here, should therefore proceed with humility, take care not to exhibit unwarranted confidence, and admit that hindsight is likely to reveal surprises and mistakes. Despite these hazards, social scientists should nevertheless use their theories to make predictions about the future. Making predictions helps inform policy discourse, because it helps make sense of events unfolding in the world around us. And by clarifying points of disagreement, making explicit forecasts helps those with contradictory views to frame their own ideas more clearly. Furthermore, trying to anticipate new events is a good way to test social science theories, because theorists do not have the benefit of hindsight and therefore cannot adjust their claims to fit the evidence (because it is not yet available). In short, the world can be used as a laboratory to decide which theories best explain international politics. In that spirit I employ offensive realism to peer into the future, mindful of both the benefits and the hazards of trying to predict events.